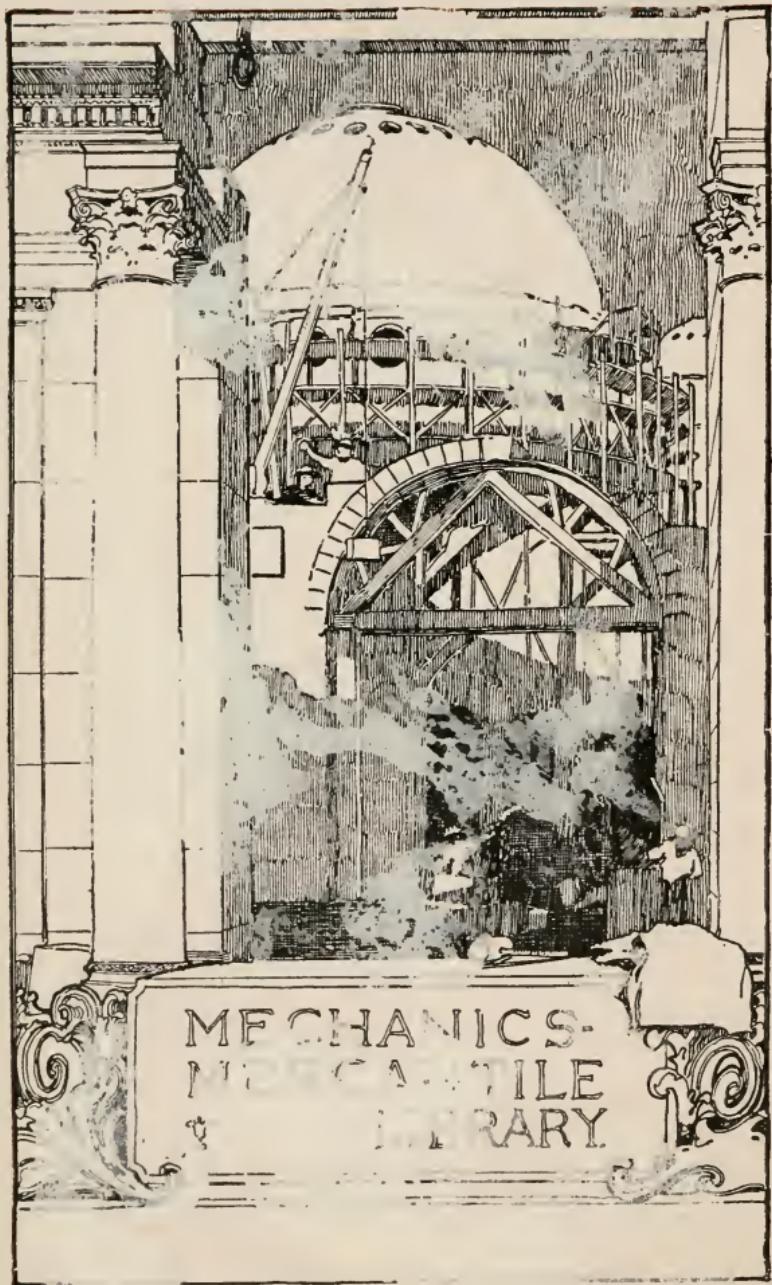


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# THE CREATIVE WILL

STUDIES IN THE PHILOSOPHY  
AND THE SYNTAX OF ÆSTHETICS

BY

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TO  
MY BROTHER

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I

ART AND LIFE



## 1.

**ART AND THE HUMAN BODY.**—The symbol (in the sense of philosophic analogy) of æsthetic truth, like the symbol of all knowledge, is the human body. The deeper facts of art and the deeper facts of life (the two being synonymous) can be tested by the forces, construction, poise, plasticity, needs, laws, reactions, harmonies, growth, forms and mechanism of the body. The body is the microcosmos of all life; and art, in all of its manifestations, is, in its final analysis, an interpretation of the laws of bodily rhythm and movement. The perception of art is an activity of our own consciousness. Art cannot exist as an isolated absolute: in order to be perceived it must be relative to ourselves. Our bodies are our only basis of reaction. Therefore art must accord with that basis. Furthermore, the sources and the end of nature are in the body. Only the aspects of nature are without. Nature is not discovered by way of the aspect to the symbol, but by way of the symbol to the aspect. Representation in art reveals only the aspect of life. The truth must emanate from, and be verified by, the body.

## 2.

ORDINARY AND ARTISTIC EXPRESSION.—All expression, in the common sense, is the result of the three elements of consciousness—will, intellect and emotion. All human expression embodies, in greater or lesser degree, these three elements. In inventions, the will plays the greatest part. In dancing, emotion is predominant. In simple engineering, intellect controls the expression. But in each of these activities the other two elements of consciousness are present in some degree. In æsthetic expression, however, each of these three elements plays an equal part: there is a co-ordination and balance of all the functions of mentation. The theme is chosen by the emotion: the intellect determines the rhythm or construction; and the will supplies the power of organisation. The three, working in conjunctive harmony, result in a perfect unity.

## 3.

MINOR AND MAJOR TRUTHS.—The artist sacrifices the minor scientific truths to his creative inventiveness, because he is ever after a profounder truth than that of the accuracy of detail. A deep divination of rhythm is of greater moment to him than the mere processes of mus-

cular control. That is why great statues, such as Michelangelo's, are seldom anatomically correct. The artist distorts superficially for the sake of obtaining a genetic proportion. This is why shallow critics call him an enemy of truth. They see only the ripples on the surface: they have not felt the underlying forces. The artist is an interpreter of causes, not a depicter of effects.

## 4.

**NATURAL AND AESTHETIC STIMULI.**—Art, which is merely an external stimulus, can be communicated to the brain only through the senses. It differs from other stimuli only in degree of perfection—that is, it has been arranged in such a manner that it produces a complete and *satisfying* reaction. But the inward activity of art, through the sense media, follows the same physical laws as does a natural stimulus. Only in the completeness of the *impression* does it distinguish itself from other stimuli. Once this fact is realised, the determining of æsthetic reactions will cease to be looked upon as an impossibility.

## 5.

**FORM AS THE BASIS OF ALL BEAUTY.**—The sense of beauty is always related to form. All

colours and musical notes are portions of a form which can be completed by other colours and notes. Colours either advance or retreat from the eye; and notes either advance or retreat from the ear. At once there is the implication of a spatial dimension which is a quality of form. A note or a colour may therefore be beautiful. A series of notes or a series of colours, so arranged as to give the impression of a balanced form (a picture or a melody), may be doubly, trebly or a hundredfold as beautiful as one note or one colour. The beauty increases in proportion to the perfection of the form. But a perfume or a texture never implies beauty. No matter how exquisite a perfume may be, there is no sense of *form* attached to it; and a series of perfumes is no more exquisite than the most exquisite individual perfume in the series. Thus with texture in its tactile (not visual) sense. It may be pleasing to the touch in many different ways—like velvet, satin, flesh, polished ivory, or a warm or cold surface. But it lacks the element of beauty because it does not give the sense of form; nor does a series of tactile experiences produce a formal conception. Only when we project a conception of form into texture (such as visualising a human body when we touch a flesh-like substance), and only when we associate a perfume with an object (calling up the flower, for instance,

for which the perfume may be named), does either one of them give us an emotion of beauty.

## 6.

**THE BASIS OF AESTHETIC FORM.** — Aesthetic form, in order to become emotion-producing, must reflect the form which is most intimately associated with our sensitivities. It must primarily be physical. The modern tendency in painting to make objects abstract and to divest subject-matter of all its mimetic qualities has led some critics and painters to the false conclusion that form itself is unrelated to recognisable phenomena. But even in the most abstract of the great painters the form is concrete. In the broad sense it is susceptible of geometrical demonstration; and its intensity is in direct ratio to its approximation to human organisms. In fact, there are no moving forms which do not have their prototypes in the human body in action.

## 7.

**THE MASCULINE AND THE FEMININE IN ART.** — All art, like life, falls into either the masculine or feminine category. In order to bring about the greatest art the form and order (which constitute the masculine side) must predominate. Objective ornament and external beauty (the fem-

inine side) must be only the inspiration to creation. That side of art which is the recording of some emotion the artist has experienced so intensely that it demands concrete expression, is feminine, because it is merely the overflow of receptivity into objectivity. Great art is not dependent on a specific exterior impulse. It grows abstractly out of a collection of assimilated impressions. When the will to order dominates the expression, these impressions take plastic form. The desire to create is feminine; the ability, masculine. All purely decorative and imitative work is feminine. The work in which there is the subjective emotion of order and harmony, in which the effect is the result of a conscious or unconscious philosophic cause, is masculine. Tiepolo, Chopin and D'Annunzio stand for the feminine; Rembrandt, Brahms and Goethe, for the masculine.

## 8.

**BEAUTY.**—The indiscriminate manner in which the word "beauty" has been applied to art has led to almost infinite confusion. "Art is beauty," the critics proclaim, and continue: "But where is the beauty in a sordid picture, in a description of a vile phase of life?" They imagine that thus they have disposed of the question. But beauty in life is one thing; beauty in art, another. In

life the word is more commonly a synonym for "sexual," "pleasing," or "desirable." Thus a woman's face may be beautiful: a flower may be beautiful. But such beauty has nothing to do with art. Beauty in art means that the forms are organised in such a way as to produce an emotional reaction of satisfaction or completion. The materials out of which these forms are constructed may be ugly from the standpoint of our daily existence. However, they must be put together in such a manner that their appearance or effect will function abstractly and produce in the spectator or auditor an æsthetic experience unrelated to those associative processes which the objects, *as objects*, might call up. This form must even be sufficiently moving to overcome—namely, to make nugatory—the effects which a recognition of subject-matter would ordinarily give birth to. When one speaks of an object in life or in nature as being beautiful, there is no implication that the object has called forth an æsthetic response. If it were possible to obtain the same sense of beauty from life, there would be no necessity for art; and if art were merely a means of re-experiencing a portion of life during the absence of that particular portion of life, it would then, of course, be necessary to reflect in art those things which we call beautiful in life. The function of art, however, is not to supply us with a scene

from life during a time when that scene is inaccessible—as a summer sunset, for instance, in winter, or a description of romantic adventures of a past age. Art has an æsthetic mission of far greater and profounder import. The person who demands “beautiful” objects in art as a means to enjoyment is one who has not yet had the greater *æsthetic* experience of beauty. A book may deal with the most squalid and tragic phases of life and still be a great work of art fraught with compelling artistic beauty. The highly sensitive man—the man capable of genuine appreciation of art—will at once realise that a perfectly organised picture of an utterly ugly and deformed body has a greater moving beauty than has the sensual attractiveness of what he terms a “beautiful” woman. Is there not more beauty in Dürer’s *Three Old Women* than in Sir Joshua Reynolds’s *The Three Graces*? And are not almost any of Goya’s witches more beautiful than the sensual women of Rossetti? Cézanne has painted still-lives of onions and cabbages which are more emotionally gratifying than a vase of roses. The pure æsthetic emotion of beauty—produced by form—is so intense, in those capable of experiencing it, that it transcends and negatives all the petty sensations derived from the pleasing (beautiful) aspects of natural objects.

## 9.

ÆSTHETIC UGLINESS.—Just as the word “beautiful,” in æsthetic terminology, has been confused with the word “desirable,” so is the word “ugly” used when “undesirable” is meant. Æsthetic ugliness, however—that is, the reverse of æsthetic beauty—has to do, not with the aspects of a work of art, but with the difficulties which stand in the way of perception. If, for instance, the process of comparing, weighing, remembering, adjusting and reconstructing is made difficult by the disproportionate arrangement of lines, tones, forms, volumes and directions—then we experience, not a feeling of satisfaction and completion, but a feeling of dissatisfaction and incompleteness. And it is this *falling short of satisfaction* which attests to ugliness in art, and which also determines the degree of ugliness. Inability to find æsthetic satisfaction in a work of art does not constitute ugliness: herein lies an obvious pitfall for dilettanti. They imagine that, because they cannot sound the subtle or complicated form in a certain art work, ugliness is present. They have mistaken chaos (to them) for the reverse of beauty. Ugliness, however, is not the negation of beauty: it is the emotional *dissatisfaction* which follows a process of contemplation. One cannot say that a work of art is ugly unless one also is

able to discover and trace the beauty in complex art. A person may be unable to receive an emotion of satisfaction from a painting, for instance; but this does not mean that the person has experienced an active dissatisfaction. One must know *why* an art work is æsthetically ugly, and, in order to know why, one must be thoroughly and profoundly cognisant of æsthetic form and organisation. Only a mathematician can detect an error in a trigonometrical problem. Those who denounce an art work as ugly because they cannot understand it—namely, because it appears chaotic to them—are ignorant pretenders. Ugliness in art has to do with fundamental laws of form. A picture of a most charming and exquisite woman may be æsthetically ugly, whereas many of our most beautiful pictures and statues portray unlovely persons.

## 10.

THE LITERAL AND THE PHILOSOPHIC MIND.—The greatest hindrance to progress in art is the lack of the broadly philosophic mind in its ranks. Such a mind would overlook the colossal mass of surface detail and go immediately to causes. The presence of causes is ever manifest; but in the world of thought, just as in the physical world, the larger, more important and more ob-

viously placed the object, the greater difficulty we very often experience in putting our finger on it. If we may call the underlying causes of existence facts, then the most difficult thing in life to grasp is facts. We deem them hidden when, in truth, they are all about us.

## 11.

**GREATNESS AND AFFECTATION.**—Truly great works of art, like truly great men, are without affectation, for the essence of greatness is indifference.

## 12.

**POISE.**—Poise is the secret of all great art in every age. Poise necessarily includes contrast. It is the etiquette which distinguishes the great works of an epoch from the merely solid or architectonic works, and is embodied in the highest æsthetic achievements of Egypt, China, India, Italy, Flanders and France. It is the *living* quality of an art work, because it is that which generates the process of gratifying symbiosis in the beholder. Poise implies the negative as well as the affirmative, the female as well as the male. It is not static balance, as in symmetry, but symmetry galvanised into a perpetual cycle of movement. It embodies all the laws of nature, for

it states the eternal placements and displacements, the fluctuations and compensations of materiality. If the work of art containing poise moves, there is always the foil of the static. If the work glows, there is the relative agent of shadow. If the work has harmony, there is the counterbalance of discord. In all the statements of poise, the opposites are likewise true. Poise is the underlying cause; all material superimpositions are resultant effects. We react to it in art because it sums up every impulse of our own physical and mental lives.

## 13.

**A WORK OF ART AS AN INTERDEPENDENT UNIT.**  
—No part—however minute as form—of a genuine piece of art can be altered without necessitating the alteration of the entire character of the work.

## 14.

**WHY AND HOW ART IS CREATED.**—What would be the purpose of any art if it did not give us a quality of emotion different from what we receive from life? Yet, we are eternally hearing praises of this or that artist's approximation to nature! The realistic novel! The novel that gives us an accurate record of material existence! Ah,

that mass of reportorial detail! And the painter whose texture is lifelike! Is it, then, more like the original than the original! The painter of sunsets—"Oh, I have seen just such a sunset as the one in that picture!" Writing—the 300-page phonograph! Painting—the competitor of colour-photography! But what of music? Let us thank God that the art of music has frightened off the "realists" by its technicalities. As yet it has not fallen a victim to those critics who would turn art into a superficial record of life. But art will weather the onslaught. The "recorders of nature" will pass away. The great works of literature, painting and music will remain, for art is a far profounder thing than realism and texture. It is the outcome of the imagination of him who has understood and experienced life. His mind is a minute filing cabinet where the *relativity* of all experienced items reigns supreme. So perfectly ordered is the artist's conception of life, so well is it understood, that in his dealing with actions, thoughts, sounds, colours, rhythms and lines, his expression follows the natural laws by which his own life and consciousness have been created. And so accurately does he know the *composite* value of his art's elements, that a thought, note or colour is never called upon to play a part incommensurate with its capability. Out of his mass of data he evolves, by combina-

tions ever new, a microcosmos in which events are the results of environment and the effects of profound causes, as in our own world. Thus does he combine familiar things in new ways to accord with the principles of æsthetics. He takes the *essence* of his special world of sound, colour or document, and creates a new world of them. Here is art's method. Here, also, is its *raison d'être*.

### 15.

**TWO ELEMENTS OF ART.**—Just as man is the result of the conjunction of the male and the female, so is art the offspring of the abstract medium (colour, sound, document) in conjunction with the concrete symbol (objects, notes, actions). Art can never be wholly abstract any more than it can be wholly imitative. Its mission is certainly not to make us think: life with its infinite variations and manifestations presents a richer field for posing problems. Nor is its mission that of imitation: such a procedure would be useless and sterile of emotional results. The middle ground between abstract thinking and imitation must, then, be its terrain. Here the abstract comes into harmonic conjunction with the concrete:—these are the outermost limits of thought and sensation. Neither one can create alone. Both must be present, like cause and ef-

fect. The cause is, of necessity, an abstract force: this is the medium. Out of it must come a recognisable world—not in the sense of life, but of art.

### 16.

**FALSE EXTERIORS.**—Fantastic and eccentric surfaces are often the disguises of spurious and worthless works. The greatness of true art, like aristocracy in the individual, is easily recognised beneath the most commonplace integuments.

### 17.

**EVOLUTION OF INTENSITY IN ART MEDIA.**—A desire for greater emotional intensity has much to do with the progress of art and especially with the strides taken by it in the last forty years. These developmental strides are undoubtedly due to the increased intensity of modern life as evidenced in mechanics, densely populated areas, the flooding of the mind with a vast amount of knowledge of events through the perfecting of means for collecting news, the rapidity of travel, the clangour and noise of modern commerce, the swiftly moving panorama of life, the discoveries in brilliant artificial lights, etc. These complexities and intensifications of modern life tend to deaden the mind (through the senses) to the sub-

tleties of minute variations of greys, the monotonies of simple melodies and rhythms, the unadorned verbiage of the 250,000-word novel, and similar manifestations of a day when febrile living had not blunted the sensitivities. All art must dominate life; and this is as true to-day as it was in the Middle Ages. The modern artist has come to realise that the media of art have never been fully sounded, and that only by perfecting the purely mechanical side of his art can he achieve that new intensity which to-day is so needed. To be sure, great art will always remain great so long as the human organisms remain unchanged; yet the demands of human evolution must be met. Consequently the means of art have been greatly developed through research and experimentation. A painter of to-day, with genius equal to that of a Rubens, could, because of the new colour knowledge, create compositions far more emotional and intense than those of the Flemish master. If Richard Strauss, with his knowledge of the modern orchestra, possessed the magistral creative vision of Beethoven, he could double the effect of the latter's music. Joseph Conrad (whom few have recognised for his significant anarchy), with the colossal gifts of a Balzac, could transcend anything yet accomplished in literature. Imagine Beethoven's *C-Minor Symphony* played behind a partition which

would deaden the vibration and neutralise the sound after the manner of a xylophone. The formal basis, the genius of its construction, would remain unchanged; but its effect on us would be infinitely weakened. A Cézanne or a Renoir reproduced in black and white is merely the skeleton of the original. Read a short condensation of *Madame Bovary*, and you have only a commonplace and not extraordinary idea. Retell Swinburne in prose, and the effect is lost. Thus can be realised the tremendous importance of the purely mechanical side of art. For, after all, art can be judged only by its effect upon the individual. It is for this reason that the prescient modern artists are experimenting, some with new instruments and methods of orchestration, some with the functionings of pure colour, and some (though fewer, alas! than in the other media) with new word combinations and documentary rhythms.

## 18.

THE ALL-IN-ALL OF ART.—Every enduring quality in great art—the art of Beethoven, Brahms, Bach, Mozart, Michelangelo, Rubens, El Greco, Giorgione, Titian, Balzac, Flaubert, Goethe—can be explained by the laws of form and organisation. One artist is greater than another solely because his form is more perfect.

There is no mysticism in art: there is mysticism only in the mind of the ignorant beholder, auditor, or reader.

## 19.

**SPONTANEITY.**—Spontaneity, the word, as applied to a piece of art, means only that the finished work has a fresh and enthusiastic appearance, as if it had been accomplished with ease. Spontaneity, the fact, means that, no matter how long or how painful has been the evolution of the created work, each element and part has been done with a sustained interest. The whole may have been changed a score of times in order to achieve the vision. Once finished, however, the vision lives and is ever young. The youth of it makes it appear as having been an easy achievement.

## 20.

**“THE GOOD, THE TRUE, AND THE BEAUTIFUL.”**—When you bracket “goodness” and “truth” with “beauty,” be sure you do not mean merely “righteousness” and “verity.” Art has nothing to do with truth in the sense of “verity” or “accuracy.” It is allied only to that truth which is forever enduring and which is the result of profound causes and of the consciousness of growth and development. And art may also be

the measure of good, but not that petty "good" which is the offspring of ethics. The "good" which art teaches is the eternal justness of proportion, the relative value of all human actions.

## 21.

ART AND THE FACTORS OF CONSCIOUSNESS.—What makes one type of art a greater, a more moving, a more complete and satisfying work than another type? Why is a symphony greater than a song? Why is a three-dimensioned painting greater than a two-dimensioned painting? Why is a novel greater than a lyric? The reason lies in the completeness or incompleteness of the series of stimuli which are the constituents of an art work. Art, being a manifold symbol of life, must, in order to be final and wholly interpretative, possess all the factors of consciousness. These factors of consciousness are: silhouette, volume, rhythm, poise, movement, tonality, and colour; and their implications, such as direction, time, extension, space, etc. Subtract any one of these factors from life, and the intensity of consciousness decreases: the *fullness* of experience is curtailed. Deduct silhouette; and only the emotion of volumnear form remains on the material side of life. Deduct volume; and visual life becomes a flat surface without poise. De-

duct rhythm; and there is at once a disintegration of parts—a chaotic world with neither order nor sequence. Deduct poise; and form becomes silhouette: life is then only a rhythmic decoration, like a coloured design on a screen, lacking depth and substance. Deduct movement; and the visual world is dead and static, incapable of stimulating the empathic imagination: all mimicry ceases, and, as a result, all processes of perception are at a standstill. Deduct tonality; and every colour is of a similar purity: there are no shadows and no degrees of intensity. Deduct colour; and the vision is black, white and grey, with only perspective to control values and distances. Only when the vision of man embodies every one of these factors, properly functioning and co-ordinated, is there the complete experience of full and intense consciousness. In normal life they are balanced into a fluid and volatile whole; and, since art is a microcosm which reveals and interprets the entirety of life, these factors must be co-related and organised in art as well. Consequently, in proportion as art fails to embody them, does it lose its efficacy as a unified and entire stimulus. The silhouette (the delimitation of volume which results in form) must be balanced as to surface outline. Volume (the extension of planar masses into three dimensions) must be balanced as to depth as well as laterally. Rhythm

must play its relative part in the construction of poise by way of both silhouette and volume. Movement must accord with the rhythm conferred on form. Tonality must be balanced in its complete scale from white to black. And colour must represent the just balance of its spectral extremes. Furthermore, each one of these factors must be balanced with, and related to, every other factor so that the sum equals the mean of all the factors' extreme fluctuability or polar extension. A work of art from which any one of these factors is lacking, no matter how perfect it may be within the boundary of its limitations, cannot be as great (namely, as completely satisfying, as entire and all-inclusive as an emotional stimulus) as a work which possesses all these factors perfectly related. A song (melody or homophony) is without depth and poise, whereas a polyphonic symphony contains not only silhouette and rhythm but (three-dimensional) form and poised movement. A lyric is based on silhouette and rhythm; but a novel embodies the qualities of a lyric and carries them into profounder emotional fields. During late years there has been a strong tendency on the part of certain artists to develop one or two æsthetic factors and to exaggerate them at the expense of others. The result, in each instance, is an overbalanced and incomplete art—an art which does not evoke a

unique æsthetic reaction. Only in ratio to an art work's approach to a complete co-ordination of all the factors of consciousness, is it great. Herein lies the explanation of the relative merits of different art types.

## 22.

**BEAUTY AND UTILITY.**—The very nature of beauty is the reverse of utility. An art work may have *incidentally* a utilitarian value; but such a value does not enhance its merit *as art*. Certain critics and teachers strive to combine usefulness and beauty, but the most they can do is to establish a synchronous existence of these two antipodal conditions. The word "beautiful" has no synonomous relation to the words "good," "efficient," "practical," or "necessary." The most useful things in life rarely call forth our visual admiration. On the other hand, we admire an object as a *pleasing sight* without inquiry into its practical benefits. Even if we are aware of an object's usefulness, we forget the fact the moment we apply the adjective "beautiful" to it. Beauty implies outlook; utility implies a practical process of mind.

## 23.

**ART AS A PHILOSOPHIC MEDIUM.**—An ignorance of æsthetics has been the chief handicap of

our philosophers. Their silence on this subject unfortunately gives impetus to the theory of "art for art's sake." The implication is that art is a pastime—something superimposed on life; that it has no organic place in the determining of social and philosophical values. Nothing could be further from the truth. Art is not a manifestation of life in the sense of "effect." Let our philosophers consider art as a cause, as a matrix for their postulates; and they will discover that art is not seldom prophetic. Taine and Emerson are conspicuous among the very few thinkers to whom the "philosophy" of art does not mean merely the "ethics" or the "sentiments" of art. For them there exists a profound relationship between the principles of art and the principles of life.

## 24.

SCIENCE AND CREATION.—The artist cannot go to the science of æsthetics to learn how he may produce beauty any more than the inventor can learn from a text-book of mechanics the secrets of a new and non-existent machine. The beauty in art can only be corroborated and analytically explained by the science of æsthetics, just as a new mechanical invention can only be tested and verified by mechanical laws. Science *accounts* for things that *are*: it does not *create* things that *are not*.

## 25.

ÆSTHETIC CREATION.—All creation in the arts is the result of some impetus received either from objective nature or from a mental process. This holds true for even so abstract an art as music. In many modern compositions the name of the work is the idea from which the work sprang, or which the composer has clothed in sound. Such works not infrequently possess a psychological interest because the main idea of the theme (with all its stress and strain, its human element, its joy and sadness, its progress and climax) has been translated, as it were, from its inceptive form, literary or poetic, onto the plane of music. It can readily be seen how far afield such ideas might lead a composer: indeed, in the majority of instances, they lead him to create such juvenile works as “programme”- and “descriptive” pieces, or other illustrative compositions wherein the music, which alone should be *felt* and *thought*, becomes the handmaiden of poetry, anecdote and drama. Before the day of the subject in music the creative impetus was the set form awaiting the composition. This form was either rigid or plastic, according to the composer’s temperament or will; but in either case it was, nevertheless, a definite mould into which the artist compressed his expression. Such formal restrictions

resulted in so-called abstract music, for there was little leeway for the free play of the composer's inspiration. Before that even, music was more largely an experiment, an adventure of the imagination; and the field of activity which spread before the composer was so great and unrestricted that, no matter which course he pursued, he was heading toward achievement. However, in those days it was not so much the direction taken (since the objective was infinitely wide) as it was the distance covered. Painting, on the other hand, was different. This art, unlike music and literature, extends itself physically into space alone. Therefore it could not be compressed into any definite form, like that of the sonnet, the novel, the essay, the four-part sonata, the rondo, or the fugue. Its form is merely delimited by the size of the canvas chosen: there can be no linear division or zone for the application of colour, which would be for the painter what the fugue form, for instance, is for the musician. Consequently, until recently, the painter has clung tenaciously to objective nature, using it as an impulse to the organisation of lines, forms and tones. But to-day the later schools of painting are choosing for their inspiration ideas which have the quality of time extension, but which can be presented as a simultaneous vision. The artist visualises nature's forces and the effects of these forces, and

then translates them, dynamically organised, into concrete expression. Thus, like all things which grow naturally from a nucleus, art must also start burgeoning from a seed-idea.

## 26.

**EFFECT OF GREAT ART.**—Great art, whether music, literature or painting, is great because of its ability to permeate every part of the spectator's being. It cannot be preponderantly sensual or preponderantly mental: it must have a perfect balance of both the emotional and intellectual. It is this grasp of every faculty of the beholder that brands it a complete gamut of stimuli.

## 27.

**DEMOCRATIC ART.**—Those whose ideal is a democratised art, and who regard art as the expression of the people, lay much emphasis on the folk-songs, folk-dances and peasant art, insisting that they are the outgrowth of the common creative instinct. These modern enthusiasts would turn over into the hands of the general public the creation of beauty. To this end they endeavour, from time to time, to rehabilitate folk-songs, folk-dances and the handicrafts, and, by this method, to re-awaken a supposititious com-

munal art spirit. The dance, however, is a primitive and very limited means of expressing rhythm; and it has already been embodied in other and profounder arts. The handicrafts were never an æsthetic expression of the community. The designs used by the old craftsmen were the work of a few sensitive individuals, and were copied and altered (generally to their detriment) by inartistic workmen who were no doubt unconscious of the linear and formal grace of the objects they laboured on. And as to folk-songs: What proof is there that these melodies were the simple expression of the people? There is no such proof, save the most superficial evidence. But there is ample proof to the contrary, both of a psychological and documentary nature. However, it is not necessary to carry the argument onto a philosophic plane: research alone will scotch the belief in a democratic art. Many of the best and most famous so-called folk-songs of Germany were actually written by Friedrich Silcher, who was not born until 1789. In France there are few authentic "folk-songs" which cannot be traced back to four or five specific models; and every one of these models is a church song. Incidentally, the models are more regular, and correctly scored, indicating that they are the perfect patterns by which the so-called folk-songs were crudely and inaccurately cut. Also, all the fa-

mous Russian folk-songs have recognisable parallels in church songs, and—what is even more significant—they end with the notes (slightly altered) of the Greek church's ritualistic "Amen." (This termination is also found in the very old French folk-songs.) Marguerite's ballad in *Faust*, *There Is a King in Thule*, Bizet's suite to Daudet's *L'Arlésienne*, the second movement of Tschaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony* and the first movement of his *First Symphony*, and the themes in Liszt's *Preludes*—to take but a few well-known examples of modern music in which the folk-song has been utilised—all have undeniable parallels in church music. In fact, there is a preponderance of evidence pointing to the fact that the so-called early folk-music was originally composed by the priests who, during the tenth and eleventh centuries, represented the most cultured and educated men of the time. Practically all of the music heard by the peasants and the common people of that day was in the churches; and there is little doubt that it was this church music, imperfectly memorised by the peasants and, in the course of time, changed slightly, vulgarised and given topical and crass words, that has come down to us as folk-songs. The same method was pursued by the peasants in their graphic arts: that is, they copied the designs of the church's fixtures and decorations, sometimes accurately, in which event

their art was good; but more often inaccurately. Practically all popular negro and "Hawaian" music is crude imitation of Methodist hymns. In countries where the influence of the church was not felt, as in Africa and North America, we find a very inferior form of folk-song, relying largely on tempo and rhythm; and an inferior graphic expression which rarely goes beyond the most simple order and symmetry. But even in these cases it is unbelievable that the melodies and designs were not the production of the few superior individuals. A study of tribal conditions in places where the most primitive customs are still adhered to reveals the fact that there are certain members of the tribe who create and perpetuate all the "artistic" activities.

## 28.

**ENDURING VITALITY OF GREAT ART.**—Why is it that, as a general rule, the really great art of the past has come down to us to-day with a halo upon it? It is not because the world has understood this great art,—the reasons the world gives for reverencing it are irrelevant. But it is because all exalted creative expression has a power of unity which is capable of pushing through the barriers of æsthetic ignorance and of making its vitality felt.

## 29.

**HARMONY OF THOUGHT AND EMOTION THE TEST OF GREAT ART.**—What man could say that great constructive thinking which results in beauty as rich and palpable as Greek, Italian and Gothic architecture and as sequentially lyrical as Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* is not as keen a joy as physical ecstasy? The ultimate effect of great art lies in the mind where it has been introduced by way of the senses. And the acid test of art's puissance is that the heart and mind—the male and female elements of human life—vibrate in harmony, forming a perfect conjunction.

## 30.

**EVOLUTION OF ART.**—Art began as imitation, then progressed to pure decoration. In this latter phase it constituted an organ whose purpose it was to fulfil a given function: it was dependent on environment for its complete destiny. From this condition art evolved into organisations, into plastically complete units, functioning within and by its own powers, independent of its environment. In this last step toward total freedom from exterior aid or hindrance, a work of art became a self-generating cosmos, and as such took on its deep philosophic character.

## 31.

**MODERN TENDENCY TOWARDS ABSTRACTION.**—During those periods when the mind was governed by sensual and emotional urgings, the image in art was in its ascendancy. (The reign of Louis XIV produced such painters as Watteau, Le Brun, de la Fosse, Largilli  re and Lancret.) But when the intellectual supplanted the sybaritic the image was destroyed, for all general and abstract reasoning tends toward the generalising of the æsthetic vision. Philosophy and art develop hand in hand. The tendency of emphasising generalities to-day and of indulging in abstract thought accounts for the direction which is being taken by art. Modern life, being abstract in its philosophical activities, is producing an abstract art.

## 32.

**CHINESE AND JAPANESE ART.**—It is indicative of a superficial æsthetic sense that one should hold the Japanese artists in high esteem, while according the Chinese secondary consideration. The Chinese represent the really great art of the East: they were the true masters of linear form in the Orient, as well as the organisers of volume expressed by tone and line. Furthermore, they were the far-East artists who embodied most in-

tensely the philosophic spirit of their nation. The Japanese painters were at best sensitively two-dimensional, and seldom revealed the *arrière pensée* for purely æsthetic emotion. It is a long step between the little more than decorative *souci* of a Hokusai and the profoundly thoughtful and conscious artistry of a Ririomin.

## 33.

THE SECRET OF GREAT ART.—Beethoven once said, "I always have a picture in my mind when composing, and follow its lines. I see and hear the picture in all its extent and dimensions stand before my mind like a cast." These words are a key to the secret of all great art. And they indicate the actual *formal conception* which gives birth to even the greatest music.

## 34.

ANALOGIES BETWEEN CREATIVE IMPULSES.—The character is to literature and the motif is to music what the line or form is to painting. A literary character is arbitrarily chosen by the writer; and, in a general way, the character's individual traits and temperament are conceived in the writer's mind before the work of projecting him through the numerous influences of his life

is undertaken. Thus, in the parlance of the painter, a literary character is a form with individual outlines, weight and colour. Every force with which he comes in contact during the unfolding of the narrative will in some way modify his disposition, as well as change the trend of his environment. In like manner, the painter arbitrarily chooses, as the *noyau* of his canvas, a certain form whose influence is imprinted over the whole work; and upon this form the sequential lines, colours and rhythms will have a determining and directing influence. Likewise, a musical composer chooses a motif—a small musical phrase that he has fixed upon; and out of this simple motif will grow a great edifice of musical form constructed by succeeding themes, counter-statements, development sections and recapitulations—all influencing the original motif, creating a sound environment, and finally bringing about a consummation in the coda. Thus the methods of all great art (no matter what its medium) have the same mental problems with which to deal. For the painter there is the shifting of directions and masses: for the musician there are the natural re-adjustments of succeeding sounds: for the writer there is the re-creation, from ideas and actions, of a new and vital ground-plan. In all the arts the creative impulse begins with an arbitrary selection, passes through a natural de-

velopment of the chosen motif, line or idea, and terminates in a formal climax. The vicissitudes of a literary character amid good and bad environments are identical with those undergone by a line or a motif. In each case the initial shape passes through the calm and turbulence of a complete existence before it comes to rest. Any great work of art is, therefore, the psychological history of an individual.

## 35.

**BALZAC AND ZOLA.**—Some critics have said that even Balzac's minor characters have genius. In other words, they are intensely living, true, solid. On the other hand, many condemn Balzac for his long genealogies and descriptions. But let these latter critics subtract from Balzac that which they dislike; and his characters would have no more life than the characters of Zola. But, since Zola possesses a far greater mass of detail than Balzac, why are not his characters solid? Why are they devoid of genius? The answer is that Zola works from the effect to the cause, while Balzac, a profound philosopher, follows the methods of nature and lets the effect result from a bringing together of fundamental causes and life forces. Balzac creates first a terrain with an environmental climate; and the creatures which

spring from this soil, and which are a part of it, create certain unescapable conditions, social, economic, and intellectual. Furthermore, the generations of characters that follow are, in turn, the inevitable offsprings of this later soil, fashioned by all that preceded them. Zola merely records a mass of effect-data—the results of causes of which he is ignorant. In other words, he imitates in minute detail what he sees and hears. He gives us a picture which is comprehensively representative of a *milieu*. After reading him we think, “What an eyesight! What ears! What an accurate depiction of objective reality!” But when we have read Balzac, the colossal literary architect, we think, “I have *lived the life* of that character. I have *felt* that *milieu*. I have been, not an onlooker, but an actor in the drama. I have had an experience, and it has become part of me.” Here we have exemplified the two kinds of art—that which we feel to be form (as in a Michelangelo), and that which we recognise as an excellent replica of form (as in a Raphael).

## 36.

RELATION OF ART FORMULE TO LIFE.—Napoleon had the plastic mind of a great artist. Herein lay his power and his success: “*Je m'engage partout, et puis je vois*” :—is this not also the

cardinal formula of æsthetic creation? Furthermore, does it not embody the secret of all successful living?

## 37.

THE REASON FOR MUSIC'S INTENSE PHYSICAL APPEAL.—Conversation is the greatest universal medium of transmitting personal emotions such as anger, sorrow, joy, discouragement, etc., and it invariably makes use of the same tones and inflections in each emotional instance. We weep and laugh in the same manner that millions weep and laugh. All tonal inflections are immediately recognised for what they indicate, whether or not the language in which they are couched is understood; and they produce an analogous emotional state in the sympathetic listener. Conversation itself is an intensified expression of nature's sounds. Our method of expressing joy or sadness or lunacy or strength or despair or depression is similar to certain noises in nature—the rippling of streams, the fall of rain, the sighing of wind, the crash of thunder, the washing of waves, the shrieks of tornadoes. Our method of expressing emotions, however, is more concentrated, of greater insistence, and possessed of a purer timbre. Music is a still higher and purer intensification of natural sounds, and is based on the inflections and intonations of the human voice;

and because it is, as it were, a twice purified medium, its effect is highly emotional in the physical sense. Literature translates its ideas through the mind into terms of the body: painting deals with a medium whose force is dependent on etherial vibrations, and the intellect must therefore project itself into a picture; but in music, based as it is on air waves which are consciously physical, the sound engulfs one almost like streams of water.

## 38.

INSPIRATIONAL BASES OF ART.—Although music raises the world of noise to the purity of sound and condenses it into a small number of absolute notes out of which every musical effect is obtained, music rarely goes to natural sounds for its *formal inspiration*. That is to say, music seldom receives its creative impulse from bird calls, winds, conversations, and the like. In the construction of a musical composition, while any inspiration is permissible, the greater composers go to ideas for the conception of their musical edifices—to ideas which symbolise actions (mental or physical) and which imply a *déroulement* into time. In painting the impulse to create is similar. Putting aside those pictures which are really no more than a replica of sculpture extended over a flat surface and given a seeming depth by the

use of line, painting, analogously with music, raises the world of colour to the purity of tint and condenses it into twelve chromatic notes and their derivatives out of which every graphic effect is obtained. Therefore, just as music, in translating the noises into the realm of pure sound, seeks inspiration, not in sound itself, but in idea and form (which become synonymous), so should painting go for its inspiration, not to objective coloured nature (though this source also may be permissible), but to generating ideas. Already there are indications that painting is striving to divorce itself from the merely naturalistic, or sculpturesque, and is seeking the realms of formal purity after the manner of music. In its application, however, painting will always make use of delimited form just as music will always utilise sound. And these inevitable partial-objectivities will keep creative expression anchored to a firm and *terre-à-terre* foundation. In the same way that music has progressed from naturalistic imitations to actional ideas (the result of which is tonal form), painting is progressing from sculpturesque objectivity to ideas which symbolise form.

THE EXEMPTION OF ART.—Since all emotion is a mechanistic reaction to stimuli, and since no

change of emotion is possible without corresponding chemical and physiological changes in the body, why should one deny the possibility of scientific analysis as applied to art?

## 40.

**SCIENCE AND TASTE.**—Important æsthetic conclusions are always arrived at through instinctive selection by highly sensitive artists. Science cannot produce great art. Taste comes first. Science follows and, through experimentations and deductions, verifies good taste.

## 41.

**ART AND CATHOLICISM.**—We hear much of art's debt to Catholicism, but, in the strict meaning of the word, there is no debt of either one to the other. From the union both have profited enormously; and it is the world at large that is indebted to the combination. There is no doubt that the Catholic Church has done more than any other one institution to disseminate the beauties of art, but, in so doing, it has added greatly to its own dignity and nobility and increased its power. For centuries the early Church commissioned artists to make of its shrines and cathedrals places whose influence

would be one of calm beauty and beatific harmony, places wherein no febrile thoughts from the outside world could long remain active; and the artists of the day, religiously inclined and introspective, created works of associative beauty, of deep and peaceful restfulness, of still and cool serenity. Churches became sanctuaries where persons coming in from the sunny street, grey with shine and noisy with mundane activities, could sit in perfect peace of mind, their eyes on the passionless faces of saints and virgins and on the subdued lines and colours of motionless compositions. The churches were well patronised, either from political or devotional motives, by both the populace and the nobles who spent much time within their cool half-light. These periods of perfect rest in surroundings fraught with an almost perfect harmony of mass and detail, could not help but have a salutary effect upon man's mind; and slowly, through generations, that influence became part of man's instinctive nature. His thoughts became more ordered; his philosophical outlook became clearer and more natural; and his taste grew into a demand for harmoniously proportioned architecture. The ruling classes, absorbing æsthetic influences more quickly than the less sensitive populace, turned their thoughts more and more to the life of the mind, which they regarded as an im-

perative half of existence, and insisted upon this infiltrated harmony being fused into their palaces and private dwellings. They developed a sure and instinctive taste for beautiful surroundings, and in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, when the bloom of national vitality and thought was approaching full flower, there came about a fluorescence of creative genius such as the world has seldom witnessed. This was because Italy for generations had felt and assimilated the order and beauty which, like a great light, had radiated over the land from the intellectual fires of the Catholic Church. The people were unable to escape from the power of that beauty, and, in succumbing, they grew to feel the deep need of those moments of religious service when they could leave the world, with its discords and crudities, behind, and bask in an almost supra-mundane peace. Furthermore, the prelates, who were the living examples to others, represented the pinnacle of culture in their day. Their friends were men of taste and intelligence, and by encouraging the creation of beauty, as an aid to their own power and dignity and pride, they set a criterion of connoisseurship which, whether right or wrong in its details, was of superior calibre. Generations of such conditions bore their inevitable fruit, giving us the Titans of the Renaissance. The rites and ceremonies of the Catholic

Church, which amount to great pageants of visual as well as spiritual beauty, have had an incalculable influence on the imagination and thought of its devotees; and the plasticity and humanity of its creed permit of a life such as nature intended men to live. Catholicism's nobility of doctrine, its adaptability to the individual case, and its freedom from final and absolute punishments and rewards were a continuance of the classic religions of Greece; and it is only under such plastic yet firm governments that the artist thrives. In such states the government, comprising the intellectual superiors who possess more dignity and nobility than the populace, gives the artist that consciousness of real power which is necessary to the high task of creation.

#### 42.

**THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF COMPLETELY DEHUMANISING OURSELVES.**—Any work of art, no matter on how high an æsthetic plane, can be completely overthrown artistically by the introduction of even a minor incongruity. A serious piece of formal literature in which there should suddenly appear, at the moment of climacteric tenseness, a passage written in a flippant and buffoonish style, would straightway be reduced to folly, even though the actual literary form should remain

intact. A funeral march which should, without warning, change its tempo into that of a gavotte, would have the spell of its power irremediably broken. A pictorial composition of organised struggling figures in which should suddenly appear a grimacing, mirth-provoking visage, would cease to move us emphatically. An ugly, even repugnant, subject can be treated artistically and endowed with æsthetic beauty. But incongruity inevitably places an insurmountable obstacle in the path of sequential thought and feeling. Because of our human associations no element of surprise which does not exist in the same emotional atmosphere as that from which it took birth, can be introduced into art without breaking the subconscious thread of our emotional thought. Thus all art, however great, is dependent upon a superficial consistency unrelated to the laws and principles of form and composition.

## 43.

**THE DEMAND FOR ORDER.**—The natural instinct for order, the desire to have details properly arranged, the pleasure derived from the justness of proportions in the factors of common experience—herein we find the human impulse toward unity. Chaos disturbs the most primitive of intelligences: in all the flux and reflux of ex-

istence there is the constant tendency toward law and order, toward the harmonising of divergencies. Even in the minds of pluralistic philosophers will be discovered a process of relationship, which co-ordinates and cements the physical and metaphysical integers. There is a gravity of the mind which attracts to it all intellectual particles; and this mental gravity is no more than the protoplasmic instinct toward unity. All mathematical divisions of one are arbitrary assumptions. The establishment of relationships—which must eventually lead to a unique measure—is our only basis of satisfaction or gratification. A work of art is only perfect in so far as it affects us as a unity—that is, as an ordered and related whole. A demand for this interrelationship in art is analogous to the same demand as applied to the factors of life. In art, however, the unity must be both real and philosophic. It must represent the concentration of the emotion of unity—the co-ordination of causes as well as effects.

## 44.

**REALISM IN ART.**—The many facts which we accumulate while superficially recording the passing of life, are, while perhaps interesting in themselves, of no fundamental æsthetic significance. The earnest preoccupation with externals, such

as we find in most Russian literature and in the realistic English novel, corresponds to the painter's depiction of the movement of the dance by catching and petrifying a single attitude of the dancer. In all such dancing pictures and reportorial novels we have only the simulacrum of action as it reveals itself to the eye—not action which results from a profound manipulation of causative forces adapted to art forms. It is imitative, not created, action. The greater works of literature, those whose details are the result of a conjunction of underlying forces, correspond to those masterful paintings wherein the objects or lines make the spectator feel, not that he is looking at the depiction of form, but that he is experiencing form itself. The former works of simple realism extend themselves from the result to the cause, and therefore, at best, are only explanatory. The latter works of profound realism follow nature's methods: they record motives and forces which generate the panorama of the visual world. The first type of realism is represented by Dostoieffsky and Degas, the second type by Conrad and Daumier.

## 45.

ILLUSTRATION AND EMPATHY.—The difference between illustrative art (such as simple melody,

shape representation and narration) and æsthetic expression is that in the former we are pleasantly reminded of an old mood, a past scene or a familiar story, while in the latter we incorporate into our lives a totally new experience.

## 46.

**ART'S SEARCH FOR TRUTH.**—The whole history of art, like the history of all thought, has been directed by a desire to arrive at truth. The first prehistoric scratches on stones, the first crude musical sounds, the first tales and sagas—all have been dictated by some cryptic inner impulse to reproduce and interpret the world of actuality. Along this path, and this path alone, has the search for truth progressed. To many it would seem paradoxical to say that the modern art which aims at an abstract æsthetic effect evolves from the same longing for truth that has given us Impressionism, the realistic novel, and illustrative and imitative music. Yet such is the case. From the painting of five hundred years ago, when the artist's only desire was optically to reproduce his model, to the recent art which strikes at underlying causes alone, we have a direct *progressus* of research and aspiration. At first the model was considered merely in its aspect of recognisable silhouette. Next the artist went

deeper into the character of the model and subordinated details in order to catch the very essence of what was before him. Then he studied the light surrounding the model, and, dissecting it, made it vibrate even as in nature. Later he discovered the formal qualities of colour, and his chief desire was to reproduce the rotundity of the model. As a result of these more or less technical considerations he became acquainted with his medium, and was able to mould it to his own ends. Needless to say, his progress toward so sure a knowledge was not so simple and smooth as it appears set down in a simple statement, for other struggles occupied his thoughts and at times distracted him from the problems directly concerned with his medium. At certain stages in his development he was necessitated to depict figures of the church and the court, or to describe events of past epochs in which he had no interest. But despite these retards he acquired, in turn, resemblance, character, objective reality, colour, and volume. It was then that he felt the need of a philosophical element which would express subjectively the laws of life just as his figures and shapes expressed the objects of life. Here entered composition—that quality which, by means of certain laws of line and mass, welds together all parts of the picture and makes of the work a symbolic replica of man's obedience to

the laws of nature. After the Renaissance the knowledge of composition died down, and many minor schools of painting sprang into life; but after a short period of experimentation in methods, composition came back to art with renewed vigour. More and more the serious creator is coming to realise that there is but one element in all deep and significant expression—*complete order*, and that this element is like a seed out of which every other element and attribute in an art work grows. After all, this complete order is what holds life itself together—the unseen order which dictates our every thought and action; the energetic and dynamic order of which our separate personalities, our very bodies and brains, are merely the inconsequential result. Just as the truth in life is hidden deeply under the visual and material world, so does the truth in art lie far beneath the document and imitation.

## 47.

**WHY ONE'S CRITERION OF JUDGMENT SHOULD BE THE HIGHEST.**—It is constantly asserted that if only the highest criteria were applied to art in one's everyday appreciations, much of the enjoyment in contemporary works would be lost. But in this assertion is discoverable the democratic instinct to elevate the mediocre and rev-

erence mere sterile sincerity and ambition. In art, as in life, results alone are of importance. Despite an artist's good intentions, he is no greater than his created products. If his results are inferior, he is deserving only of that place in the appreciative esteem which his actual work warrants. If this standard were rigidly applied he would never overestimate his capabilities or cease making efforts to progress. To the contrary, he would heed the call of a far goal and would strive to attain to greater heights. Judged by low standards and lauded for ambitious seriousness, he is content with meagre attainment. Thus, on the personal side of art, the inferior criterion has its deleterious effect. But there are more serious results following the adoption of a low æsthetic measure. The entire standard of art valuation eventually falls. Arbitrary and wholly sentimental considerations become attached to æsthetic appreciation: false values spring up; and the true purpose of art is lost in a welter of irrelevancies. Men of talent are unconsciously turned toward goals wholly outside the paths of pure creative endeavour. The great artists, to be sure, are in no way contaminated by these distorted visions; but their progress is retarded because they are unable to utilise the discoveries of lesser men, and must therefore give much of their time to the solution of minor

problems. The lesser men, corrupted by low standards, have no incentive to advance on any one side of art beyond the narrow boundaries prescribed for them. They contribute no research to æsthetics which would facilitate the advancement of the great.

## 48.

**RESULT OF DEMOCRACY ON ART.**—Once the principles which are necessary to æsthetic expression are known, there will be a minimum of chaotic variation in the conceptions of different artists. During all great creative periods there has been a general homogeneous trend toward certain results, because then artists had a definite conception of composition, and possessed, in certain conventions of methods, a definite vehicle of expression. To-day the great disintegration of effort is almost wholly the result of a widespread ignorance of art laws. In an age of research each man becomes a law unto himself, and regards one idea as just as valuable as another, provided it is novel or personal. He therefore proclaims himself the equal of all others because he is “expressing himself.” Are not his responses to objective stimuli as genuine as those of any one else? This may be true; but a recorded reaction to stimuli is not necessarily art. The in-

adequacy of such a man's work is due to the fact that he has never been taught the basis on which creative effort must be built, and, as a result, his "expression" is of no more æsthetic importance than his personality.

## 49.

**ART AND POPULARITY.**—Any attempt to democratise art results in the lowering of the artistic standard. Only in primitive times, when art was simple and without philosophic significance, was there any intimate intellectual relationship between artist and public. The purely pictorial has always been relished by the general,—herein lies their supreme standard of appreciation. In the ancient world art was a utility. So-called primitive works of art were outgrowths of the public's delight in the contemplation of images. The masses created the demand for art which, for the most part, was limited to designs wholly obvious to the most rudimentary mind. At that period the artist was only a craftsman who was content to follow the people's dictates and to reflect their crude taste. Art was then democratic. But when the ideal of fluent movement was introduced into it, art began to grow more rhythmic and individual. Painting, drawing and sculpture clothed themselves in the integuments of æstheticism: they took on significance; and at

once the people's delight in them began to diminish. The artist's mind had begun to develop beyond his public; and a general antagonism toward all æsthetic endeavour sprang into existence. Despite the attempts of the nobles to step into the breach, this antagonism has persisted for centuries. The large majority of people to-day are hostile to the artist. He is looked upon as one who threatens the whole social fabric; and art itself is considered the manifestation of disordered and dangerous brains. But although this hostility has ever been present, art has forced its way through a splendid evolution, constantly and persistently developing beyond the common understanding of mankind. To reinstate it again into popularity would mean that it would have to revert to its primitive state, to forgo its profound problems, and to adopt once more the simple vision of ignorance.

## 50.

**THE EDUCATIONAL EFFECT OF AESTHETIC SURROUNDINGS.**—Deep-seated in every human being is a desire for the varied, commonly termed the beautiful; and one's true comprehension of art and one's ability to react to æsthetic emotion are merely educational and philosophic extensions of this unconscious desire. Among people who see no ordered pictures, hear no great music, or read

no good literature we find an innate, if crude and unorganised, taste for beauty which manifests itself in domestic ornaments, household utensils and raiment, and which expresses itself in awe and silence before grandiose architecture, pomps, pageants, and impressive scenery. Unquestionably the great majority of these persons would be more contented and happy in interiors whose proportions were just and whose colours and ornaments were harmonious. For them at present the greatest art is without meaning because a genuine desire for such works presupposes not only a high intellectual development, but a full capacity for pure æsthetic emotion: to this plane the average person has not ascended. But the constant influence of harmony and proportion in all objects surrounding even the ignorant individual cannot but produce a definite elevating effect on his taste—an effect proportionate to the insistence of his environmental harmonies. After several generations of such conditions people would come to demand the permanency of such surroundings, with the result that even their commercial activities would be dominated by art; and there would spring into existence an epoch of æsthetic culture far greater in intensity than that of Greece or of Renaissance Italy. Here would be a society of patricians: its mediocre members would surpass in art knowledge the aver-

age connoisseur of to-day ; and its great men would overtop the pinnacles of the ancient world. In order to produce such conditions the principles and the philosophy of art should now be disseminated in the schools. Definite illustrations and explanations of works under discussion should be given. Only general statements of detail should be taught, emphasis being placed on the profounder causes underlying them. Taste and order should be the cardinal requisites of all students. Thus would the most complete method of acquiring happiness become inherent in mankind.

## 51.

MODERN COMPLEXITIES OF LIFE AS EXPRESSED IN ART APPRECIATION.—Actual, not apparent, simplicity in art is satisfying to simple minds. The modern man has become too complex to enjoy the simple things of life. The early simple theatre, the simple melodies of antiquity, and the simple visions of primitive painters no longer interest us deeply because of their very simplicity. Our minds call for a more forceful emotion than these easily grasped art works can give us. We require problems, inspirations, incentives to thought. And as the complicated and organised forces of life become comprehensible to us, we shall demand more and more that our

analytic intelligences be mirrored in our enjoyments.

## 52.

**THE INTELLECT'S PLACE IN ART APPRECIATION.**—The process of reasoning which is necessary to appreciate fully a work of art is not the same as mechanical or scientific observation. Art is not a provable theory whose comprehension affects us like that of a piece of intricate machinery, for, once we understand its constitutional qualities, the emotional reaction will follow so rapidly as to give the impression of spontaneity. Our process of conscious observation in time becomes automatic. The absolute truth of art exists no more than the absolute truth of life: art, like life, must ever be an infinite search for the intractable. Its forms, like the eternal readjustments and equilibria of life, are but an approximation to stability. The forces of all art are the forces of life, co-ordinated and organised. We cannot sound their finality, and they are insusceptible of exact definition. No formula will permit of æsthetic creation, any more than a scientific formula will permit of the creation of life. This is why understanding must ever be relative, and why, in applying our intelligences to an art work, we are not systematising our emotions. We are only attuning ourselves to art's secrets.

The problems in life and art are eternally drawing toward an ever-retreating consummation.

## 53.

**REPRESENTATION IN ART.**—Were representation the object of art, art would always be inferior to life—a mere simulacrum of our daily existence, ever inadequate in its illusion. But suppose this realism is idealised, you suggest. Very well, then: it would cease to be mere representation, and would be great in ratio to this added quality of idealism. The idealism would be the important æsthetic factor. And it is this idealism (so-called because its precise characteristics are not understood by the speaker) with which the artist is concerned. In it are embodied those principles which distinguish creation from representation. Herein lies the æsthetic import of art. All else is mere dead material.

## 54.

**GREATNESS AND NATIONALITY.**—There is no nationality in art. Those who plead for a national art are ignorant of art's primary significance. Only in the most superficial qualities can the traits of a nation be expressed; and these qualities are æsthetically negligible. The germ of

genius, which lies at the bottom of all high creative expression, is changeless and eternal; and for this reason a great man belongs to all countries and to all times. He embraces every struggle that has gone before.

## 55.

**NATIONAL TYPES OF ART AND THE INFLUENCES WHICH DICTATE THEM.**—When trying to sound the reason why one nation creates one kind of art and brings it to its highest perfection, why another excels in a different art and brings forth only mediocre or imitative works of the first kind, and why yet another nation reaches its highest level in a third kind of art, we must go deep into their organisms and influences. Superficial characteristics will never reveal the true source of æsthetic variation. Taine has brought together the salient characteristics of nationality, and by stating their sources has explained their relation to art production. From these can be deduced the specific kinds of art which each nation has given birth to and the reasons which underly them. In ancient times the Greeks seemed to combine all the art impulses of the various modern temperaments: they produced philosophy, music, poetry, prose, sculpture, dancing and painting. This versatility was a result of their wonderfully bal-

anced mental and physical forces. The separate traits of these inclusively intelligent people are to be found, exaggerated, developed or weakened, in all the Germanic and Latin races and their descendants to-day. Their philosophic attributes have passed, somewhat vulgarised and systematised, to the modern Germans. Their subtleties, undergoing a similar metamorphosis, have lodged in the French temperament. And their nobility and pride of race are to be found, converted into a sentimental fetish, in the Spaniard. It is in these traits, disintegrated among many peoples and given an acuteness or complexity in answer to the needs of modern life, that form the matrices out of which modern plastic art has issued. The genius of the ancient Greek was eminently pictorial; his imagination encompassed all life by way of images. This is explainable by the fact that he understood man and studied him more deeply than he did nature. His conclusions were dictated by the functioning of the human body to which he turned because in it he found something tangible, absolute, concrete. By keeping himself before his own eyes as an important entity he conceived a precise, formal idea of life. This attitude led to generalising and to an utter indifference toward useless details. With the Italians of the Renaissance we have the Greek conditions over again. Between these two nations there

existed temperamental similarities despite the feudalism and asceticism of the Middle Ages. Like the Greeks, the Italians preferred symmetry and proportion to comfort, the joy of the senses to celestial pleasures after death. In the religion of the Italians was that toleration which is necessary to art production; and there were courts where intellectual attainments were placed above all else. The greatest difference between the Greeks and the Italians was that whereas the Greek mind and body, exquisitely balanced and wholly harmonious, constituted a unified and conjoined whole, the Italian mind and body were separate developments. The Greeks cultivated sound, rhythm, poetry and movement simultaneously in their theatres and dances. The Italians laid stress on these various impulses at different periods and, instead of welding them into one impulse, cultivated and intensified them individually. Just as sculpture was the leading art of the Greeks, so it was the leading art of the Renaissance, for the Italian painting was primarily sculpturesque, inspired by form and line, not by tone and gradation as was the painting of the Netherlands. The colour that the Italian painters used was purely decorative, never realistic: it was an ornament superimposed on perfect sculptural forms, just as the figures and designs of the Gothic cathedrals were superimpositions on an unstable, tortured science.

In Germany to the north we find other conditions at work, and, as a result, other types of mental and creative endeavour. The temperamental difference between the Germans, and the Greeks and Italians is due in large measure to climate. In the greater part of Greece and Italy the light is so luminous that the colour is sucked from nature, and all that remains is line and hard-cut, precise silhouette. Therefore the Greeks' and Italians' perception is formally sculptural, for it is silhouette which inspires to sculpture. With such a vision ever before their eyes it follows that their thought—the life of their minds—should be general and, though specific, conventionalised. The Germanic races are the offspring of an opposite environment. Their climate is damper and more overcast. Cold and mist are far more general than to the southward. Hence we see no sculpture among the Germans; and since their environment is the opposite of clear-cut and incisive, they deal in metaphysical terms, naked symbols devoid of images, precise ideas and abstract systems of life. As a result the German is patient, researchful, metaphysical, whereas the Italian is mercurial, seeing the metaphysical only in terms of the pictorial. The Germans have had to clothe themselves, and thus have not lived with, as it were, and glorified the human body. In their paintings the *idea* is the highest consideration.

The German is methodical, and the consequent slowness of his mental processes protects him against quick and distracting reactions, and permits him a greater capacity for sequential thinking. But with all his abstract philosophical reasoning he is a realist, for he never conceives idealised forms, as did the Renaissance Italians. He penetrates to the foundations even when those foundations are ugly, his ideal being internal, rather than external, truth. The German rests all his thoughts on a definite basis of science and observation, and all his thinking must lead to an absolute result. Here we have an explanation for his music. In it he expresses the abstract conceptions of life; and his ability to create it rests on his infinite patience in deciphering the enormous mass of requisite technical knowledge necessary to its successful birth. The Dutch and the Belgians—both stemming from Germanic stock—represent once more the influence which climate and religion and methods of life have on æsthetic creation. The Dutch chose Protestantism, a form of religion from which external and sensuous beauty had been eliminated. They adopted the settled contentment of mere animal comforts, and, as a result, grew torpid and flaccid through good living and the gratification of heavy appetites. The ease of their existence brought about a tolerance which created an art appreciation; and

appreciation is the soil in which art production always flourishes. The result was an art which was an added comfort to the home—an art with a sensuality of vision which reflected the sensuality of life. The Dutch, comfortable and disliking effort, lived in a land which was all colour and blurs. Man was pictured as he appeared, neither idealised nor degraded, with little *parti pris*, as great masses of substance, with misty outlines, emerging from a tenebrous climatic environment. The Belgians, on the other hand, were Catholics. They were more sensuous, more joyous than the Dutch. They saw images through the eyes of Catholicism. Their lives were filled with pomp and show and parade: even their form of worship was external and decorative. Consequently their art, while realistic, was more exalted and sensuous, filled with a spirit of freedom and infused with philosophic thought. These two types of realism are represented in Rubens and Rembrandt. France received all its permanent impetus to plastic creation from the north. There was a short period when the art was a political *mélange* of classic ideas, and another period when the Venetian admiration resuscitated composition (as in Delacroix); but the permanent contributions came in the form of Flemish realism with its delicacy of tonal subtleties. The seventeenth and eighteenth century

Dutchmen were echoed in the Barbizon school; and this salutary reaction to nature from Græco-Roman academism gave an added impetus to realism. The mercurial quality of the French mind, now classically philosophical, now naturalistic, now stiffly moral, taking on all the colours of all influences, demands strong emotions. Two centuries of inventions and complex life, added to the adopted culture of the Dutch and the Italians, created an art which was novel, colourful and at times even sensational. The individualism of the Renaissance found a new home in the French intellect. That love of life and the reversion to a more joyous existence (which came after the Revolution) cast the Church out and drove the intellectuals back to the worship of nature. The French then had time to enjoy the complexities of composition; and the elegance of their cultivation resurrected an insistence upon style. They wrote no philosophies; they were not interested in detailed research; but they lived febrilely, and the records of their lives, subordinated to general philosophic plans which were created by style, produced great literature. Like children they received the half-completed flowers of the Renaissance and the partial realism of their forebears, and these bequests were a source of wonder and delight to them. They continued both quickly on a wave of reaction by expressing the

one by means of the other. They combined the Germanic and the Latin impulses; and from this perfectly poised combination issued the excellence of their painting and literature. Their work in the other arts was merely an aside, as was poetry in Flanders, and painting in Germany. They lacked the German meticulousness and preoccupation with abstractions which are necessary to the highest musical composition; and their plasticity of mind made possible intenser images in painting than in poetry. In England few outside influences have taken hold. Its geographical isolation has resulted in a self-contented provincialism. The British mind, like the American mind, is, and always has been, unsympathetic to art. Art is regarded as a curiosity, an appanage of the higher education. Intelligence, as such, is not believed in. With the English all thought must be bent toward a utilitarian end, just as Latin thought is turned toward form and German thought toward philosophy. In the stress of affairs Englishmen have little time for so exotic a flower as art. Their minds are rigid and immobile, largely because of their form of religion. They are aggressively Protestant. In their religion there are absolute punishments and rewards untempered by circumstances or individual cases. There are fixed emotional values and absolute foci of the mind; and, as a consequence,

the race is without plastic expression. Their minds, groping after beyond-world comforts, have become static and out of touch with the actualities of existence. They harbour Utopian schemes, and consider life as they deem it should be lived, not in accord with nature's intention. Even in their rare painters of landscape, like Turner and Constable, the spirit of the subject is hunted above form; and when this is not the case, their pictures are, in essence, moral and anecdotal. Because the English are primarily busy, constantly occupied with practical, commercial accomplishments, they have no leisure for an art which is a compounding of subtleties, like the painting of the Dutch and the music of the Germans. Their tastes naturally resolve themselves into a desire for a simple image—that is, for an art entirely free from the complex intricacies of organisation. Their pleasures must be of a quick variety so that the appreciation may be instantaneous. And since their lives are neither physical nor mental but merely material, like the Americans', it is natural that they should react to trivial transcendentalism and sentimentality. They produce no art which is either philosophical or plastically formal. But in the art of poetry they lead the world. Poetry presents an image quickly, and it has a sensual side in its rhythm as well as a vague and transcendental side in its content.

Poetry is the lyricism of the spirit, even as sculpture is the lyricism of form. Both are arts which represent quick reactions, the one sentimental and spiritualised, the other tangible and absolute. Even English style is more a matter of diction than of underlying rhythm. The conditions, religion, temperament and pursuits of America are similar to those of England, and American art is patterned largely on that of its mother country. Poetry is the chief, as well as the most highly developed, æsthetic occupation of Americans. Everywhere to-day, however, national conditions have less influence than formerly. The cosmopolitanism of individuals is fast breaking down national boundaries. The modern complex mind, encrusted by 2,000 years of diverse forms of culture, is becoming more a result of what has gone before than a result of that which lies about it. We of to-day easily assimilate influences from all sides, and while some of the arts are still the property of temperamentally kindred nations, the admixture of nationalities and the changes of régime are constantly reversing the old abilities.

## 56.

SCIENCE AS AN AID TO ART.—Beneath all great art there is to be sensed a definite and single purpose which had for its goal the solution of

problems touching on the activities of the creative will. These problems have to do with complex phases of human psychology; and whereas artists have merely sensed them and attempted to solve them through the senses by presenting æsthetic stimuli based on personal taste or selection, scientists have of late striven to reach a solution through psychological experimentation. Art and science are not unrelated, although to mention the two in the same breath has long constituted a breach of intellectual etiquette. The adjective "scientific," used opprobriously, has been hurled at artists who strove for conciseness of purpose and who indulged in self-analysis and critical precision. Necromancy in art, however, is preserved only by non-thinkers; and since the genuine creators have sought the services of science, tremendous advances have been made in means. The true modern artist no longer fears exact knowledge; and, as a result, we stand at the threshold of the purification of æsthetic conception and procedure.

## 57.

**THE LAW OF AESTHETIC GROWTH.**—In the evolution of art every genuine innovation of method must be developed and consummated before a new one can take its place. Michelangelo brought sculpture to its highest point of development:

after him a new viewpoint entered into plastic expression. Rubens completed the era of linear oil painting ushered in by the Van Eycks. Then came a hiatus; and Delacroix, Courbet and Daumier went forward with painting's evolution in an entirely new direction. The Impressionists completed the study of light; and, by thus solving and disposing of that æsthetic problem, they made possible the advent of that cycle of which Cézanne was the archaic father. Beethoven brought to a climax the symphonic form which Hadyn had tentatively set forth; and since his day a new harmonic era has been steadily gaining impetus. Swinburne carried the rhymed lyric to its highest point of development with the means at hand; and to-day a new prosodic field is being diligently ploughed by the newer poets. It is only after the *épuisement* of a certain line of endeavour that the necessity to seek for a new and more adequate means of expression is felt. This is why the many attempts at circumventing the *progressus* of art (such as formal novelties, reversions to primitivism, simplifications, and the like) have been short-lived. The evolution of art is as gradual, logical and inexorable as the growth of life in the individual. Those artists who fail to recognise this basic law of æsthetic development succeed only in giving birth to an abortive and ineffectual art—an art which has no

enduring qualities, but which contains the germs of decay and death.

### 58.

**ART AS AN EXPRESSION OF LIFE.**—The dictum that “art should express life” has retarded the development of æsthetic expression more than any other. The common tendency is to think of life in terms of life’s effects—local colour, character, light, visual movement, determinable shapes, texture, and the like. But, in reality, if one is to express life, and not merely the results of life, it is necessary to determine the causative forces whose conjunctive activities produce recognisable objects. These forces, being hidden and abstract, we can neither see nor grasp; but we can nevertheless trace them by their workings. And their results, when constantly repeated on a logical schedule of time, we designate as natural laws. Our every movement and thought, being merely an objective expression of these forces, consequently follows a corresponding schedule; and it is these underlying forces, in conjunction with their resultant objectivity, which constitute the profound and significant “life” that art should express. Every human being possesses practically the same vision of colours or forms; but it is the artist’s duty to co-ordinate them into a

replica of that order of forces which is the foundation of every impulse and material phenomenon.

## 59.

**THE ARTIST AS EDUCATOR.**—The artist is an educator in that he makes one think and feel more deeply before nature. He expresses in a definitely limited space a complete cosmic order of form: he reduces the whole gamut of human thought and vision to a definite and precise statement. In the simplest melodies we have stretches of tone which encompass or imply every possible sound: it is, in fact, only through this complete reflection of life that the artist produces satisfaction. There still persists the idea that, in painting, colour is merely an ornament; but those who have developed a pure colour sense can no longer enjoy incomplete spectra wherein either the cold or the hot hues predominate; and it is in this new colour art that we find a poise of chromatic, as well as of formal, values. Great literature, likewise, presents us with a complete cycle of emotional and mental life. In our every-day experience we never encounter all sounds and colours and systems of thought; but in the highest art every phase of life is embodied and balanced. Little by little science is analysing and setting down all that art has expressed; and phi-

losophy is now basing its conclusions on science. Eventually art will be recognised as the form-mould from which both science and philosophy will take shape.

## 60.

**ART FOR ART'S SAKE.**—The dissimilarity between medium and effect in music, painting and literature is what makes these arts almost inexhaustible in their potentialities for novelty and development. For instance, in music, notes are ordered, not to make pleasing combinations of sound, but to create forms and combinations of forms. Thus there is a psychological breach between the medium and the result. Sound for sound's sake would, in a very short time, be exhausted as even a pleasurable amusement. Likewise, words for words' sake would give us, not literature, but a meaningless and slightly musical poesy. And again, colour for colour's sake would result only in palty decoration, as limited as Professor A. Wallace Rimington's colour-organ. In any such absolute case the arts would be entirely sensational in the physical sense, divorced from the process of form perception. But when we use words for the sake of sequentially organised ideas, colour for the sake of co-ordinated formalised forces, and notes for the sake of interrelated sound-shapes, we possess in each instance an art

which is at once complete and susceptible of infinite development. Consequently art cannot exist for art's sake, save in its most primitive and trivial stages. It is a philosophic system based on concrete forms and objective experiences.

## 61.

**THE EMOTION OF FORM IN NATURE AND IN ART.**—If a work of graphic art fails to give us, either objectively or subjectively, a greater sensation of form than we can get direct from nature, its compositional order, though rhythmically perfect, cannot make it vital or attractive. The complex organisation of a picture reveals itself only after prolonged contemplation; and if there is not a plenitude of full form to inspire the spectator to this contemplation he turns away: the emotional element is lacking. A sensitive person, seeing the flesh-like and tactile nudes of Rubens or Renoir, is astonished by their almost super-lifelike solidity; and the subjective emotion of form produced by Cézanne, once experienced, is never forgotten. It is these formal qualities in Rubens, Renoir and Cézanne which halt us and lead us into the intellectual order of the picture. Thus in music. The score dominates and moves us more when we hear it played than when we merely read it.

## 62.

**CONCEPTION OF THE GREAT IDEA.**—Every idea, from infancy to old age, is motivated by man's contact with the objective world. A conscious effort toward great thought ends either in chaos or in an abstract triviality. Great ideas, like all significant achievements in life, come only as a result of certain perfect conditions; and these perfect conditions are what give birth to one's ability to separate ideas which are sterile from ideas pregnant with possibility. The artist's process of thought is like an arithmetical progression. He conceives a trivial idea from his contact with exterior nature. Something in this trivial idea, after a period of analysis, calls up another idea which, in turn, develops, through volitional association, into a group of ideas. And this group becomes, for him, the basis of constructive thinking, replacing, as it were, the original basis of objectivity. From his segregation and arrangement of these ideas, which are no longer directly inspired by nature, there springs the great idea. It is the golden link in a chain of trivial ideas—the heritor of an intrinsically worthless thought. An artist's intellectual significance lies in his power to presage instinctively the future importance of seemingly inconsequential reactions, for a great thought, like a great mind or epoch, is

not an isolated phenomenon, the result of an accident. It is subject to the same laws of evolution and growth as is the human body. That is why one can never consciously force great thinking; it is impossible to call up that particular group of trivial objective ideas which, when analysed and augmented, will generate the great idea. This is true also of those creative processes which result in concrete manifestations. A musician cannot force himself to play impromptu a masterpiece, even though he be a master. Here again the combination of circumstances must be *au point* before his creative faculties are in their highest state of fluency. But when he recognises a pregnant musical form which casually results from idle improvisation, he may develop and continue it, add to it and take from it, until, at last, the final form of the composition appears. The generation of great ideas is analogous to the generation of great forms. In lesser men the beginnings of a great idea are passed over unnoticed.

## 63.

ART'S INDIRECT PROGRESS.—The evolution of art is no more mechanical than the development of the individual. In it there are irregularities, retrogressions, forward spurts, divagations, distractions. At one time it goes ahead rapidly;

at another, it seems to halt. There are periods of darkness and stagnation as well as periods of swift and splendid development. Some men carry forward the spirit of research; others, employing the qualities which have been handed down to them, breathe into old inspirations the flame of individual idiosyncrasy. During one era there will be a progress in principles; during another era progress will have to do entirely with means. Every new movement has about it a certain isolation of ambition and aspiration. The first innovators push out the boundary on one side; their followers, on another; and the final exponents of an epoch, having fully assimilated what has preceded them, combine the endeavours and accomplishments of their forerunners and create new and lasting forms.

#### 64.

**ART AND THOSE WHO OBSERVE LIFE.**—The man who is most easily turned toward art and in whom a love of æsthetic form can be readily developed, is the one who has keenly observed the appearances of life, and who, as a consequence, has posed problems which mere collections of data cannot solve. Such a man is ever searching for a firm foundation on which to base his speculations; and once he has discovered the philosophical con-

tent of art, he will know that he can find there a solution to his problems and a *rationale* for future observations. Art will turn him from his empiricism to naturalistic truths—not by systems of theory or by absolute answers, but by pregnant suggestion.

## 65.

**THE UNIVERSAL IN ART.**—Not until the facts of art are dissociated from the individual—that is, are separated from all personal considerations—has the intellect been brought to bear on æsthetics. Only the impersonal can attain to immortality: it belongs to no cult, no period, no one body of men: it reflects the whole of life, and its vision is the universal vision of mankind. Art is the mouthpiece of the will of nature, namely, the complete, unified intelligence of life—that intelligence of which each individual is only an off-shoot, or, rather, a minute part. An artist's mind, in the act of creating, is only an outlet of that intelligence. Art is the restatement of life—a glimpse, brought to a small focus, of the creative laws of nature. It reveals the universal will, the machinery, as it were, of the human drama; and in our appreciation of it we are exalted because in it we experience, not a segment of life, but the entire significance of life. Thus can be

accounted for art's philosophic, as well as its humanly concrete, side.

## 66.

**ART AND NATURE.**—Art does not show man the way to nature. Rather does it lead him via nature to knowledge.



## II

# PROBLEMS OF AESTHETICS



## 67.

**MEDIA OF ART.**—The medium of painting is colour. The medium of music is sound. The medium of literature is document. *Æsthetic* form is produced by the arrangement and co-ordination of the differentiations of these media.

## 68.

**REPRESENTATIVE AND ABSTRACT ART.**—The person who reacts only to drawings or paintings which depict and order objective nature, and who is unable to follow those artists who carry their creations into the realms of subjective and abstract organisation, is the one whose appreciation is founded on other than purely æsthetic considerations. When contemplating a picture which has for its subject recognisable objects which the painter has, to some extent, distorted in order to make them fit a general plan, the defenders of representation are satisfied with it, provided the order is complete. They feel in the canvas a sensitivity to nature on the part of the artist; and if that sensitivity is subtle and profound, they experience the intense memory-life which is therein expressed. And at the same time, but *second-*

arily, they feel a satisfactory sense of completion, and reconstruct the picture's generating rhythms which lead to a formal climax. In addition, there is an *associative* satisfaction aroused by the objects themselves: the perfume of flowers, the coolness of trees, the mystery of hills, the grandeur and implacability of the sea, etc. . . . Thus there are three sets of stimuli—the poetical, the empathic, and the associative—which these lovers of representation come to look upon as constituents of æsthetic enjoyment. Therefore when they stand before a picture in which there is neither a poetical nor an associative appeal, they immediately conclude that there exists in it neither sensitivity nor order: they can find no related objects, such as houses, trees and hills; nor can they see the dominance of certain colours, like green or grey or brown in landscapes. This conclusion, however, is erroneous, for such groups of objects and such dominance of colours only superficially weld a picture into a whole; and the associations of smell, temperature and the like belong wholly to the illustrative or literary side of art. In an abstract picture the sensitivity of the artist must be much greater than in a representative one. Where in the latter the artist merely refines and orders *seen* colours, in the abstract paintings he uses a greater range of more intense colours and is necessitated to *create new*

*forms.* In order for him to accomplish this task his sensitivity to formal sequence must be developed to a degree where it becomes almost a new sense; and his colour appreciation must be the outgrowth of a knowledge of the very functioning qualities of colour. To draw an exquisite formal conception of the human body requires genius, but genius whose ability lies really in re-creating. Abstract forms require pure creative ability. When a picture of objective nature is perfect, save, perhaps, for two inharmonious colours, we may overlook the fault. But in an abstract picture such an error spells disintegration of the work as a whole. Thus the artist's sensitivity has to become redoubled for abstract forms, because the slightest misstep means failure. Abstract form is not, as is popularly believed, emancipation. It makes the supremest demands on the artist, by tightening his order and by intensifying his vision.

## 69.

THE FOUR INTERPRETATIONS OF ARTISTIC FORM.—Form, in the artistic sense, has four interpretations. First, it exhibits itself as shallow imitation in painting, as reportorial realism in literature, and as simple tune in music. (Sorolla, Zola and Rubinstein make use of this type of form.) Secondly, it contains qualities of solidity

and competent construction such as are found in the paintings of Velazquez, the novels of Tourgueniev and the music of Liszt. Thirdly, it shows signs of having been arbitrarily arranged for the purpose of volumnear accentuation. (Poussin, George Moore and Wagner represent this development of form.) Last, form reveals itself, not as an objective thing, but as an abstract phenomenon capable of giving the sensation of palpability. All great art—the art of Rubens and Michelangelo, Balzac and Flaubert, Bach and Beethoven—falls under this final interpretation.

## 70.

**SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE FORM.**—In art, form may be either objective or subjective. That is to say, there is the form which we recognise as such through its familiar contours, like the objects in a Chardin still-life. This form is limited in size by our knowledge of the actual object which it represents. This is objective or quantitative form; and its perception is largely the result of our associative processes. Again, there is that form which has no counterpart in actual life. It is without measurable dimensions, its size being relative to the other forms about it. It does not represent any specific object with which we are familiar: we simply feel its tactility

qualitatively. All great works of art contain this type of form, whether it is presented abstractly or through recognisable phenomena: in the latter case the objects cease to exist as *objects*, and create in us an *emotion of form* as in contradistinction to a recognition of form.

## 71.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN VOLUME AND FORM.—When two or more unrelated colours or sound-masses are in close juxtaposition, the inherent tendency of certain colours and notes to recede, to advance, or to appear opaque or transparent, gives birth, in the spectator, to a consciousness of spatial extension—that is, of a quality of shape which exists in depth as well as on a surface: in other words, a feeling of volume. This volume, because of its unorganised contours, appears to exist as a haphazard and formless shape, like a gas; and, by reason of its formal indefiniteness, it cannot produce in us an emotion of satisfaction. It is only when such a volume becomes an integral, precise and complete part of an organisation—whether that part be abstract, objective or imaginary—that it becomes form in the æsthetic sense. Then its recognisability, or its definite adaptability, makes it possible for us to react to it pleasurable. Hence: Volume is

abstract substance, either actual or imaginary, without definite delimitations. Form is volume delimited and related to an organisation.

## 72.

**TWO-DIMENSIONAL AND THREE-DIMENSIONAL FORM.**—The form in the world's greatest art is three-dimensional. It not only moves laterally, but orientates in depth as well. Polyphony is three-dimensioned music, and corresponds to the form in Michelangelo and Rubens. It also has a parallel in that literature in which the document has been given a solidity, as in Balzac. Examples: Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*—the *Kermis—Illusions Perdues*. Melody, or homophony, is two-dimensional form and corresponds to the decorative type of painting, such as Picasso's drawings, Japanese art and the canvases of Botticelli. Its literary analogy is to be found in the simple objective tale—the novels of Gautier, for instance. Examples: Schubert's *Seventh (C-major) Symphony*—Botticelli's *Spring*—*Mademoiselle de Maupin*. In all these examples there is, of course, more than the mere form. Their form is here considered only from the qualitative standpoint. Each of these works has been arranged and composed; that is, their form has been made rhythmic.

## 73.

**QUALITATIVE ANALOGIES IN THE DIFFERENT ARTS.**—The form in all the arts must be related in its details as well as in its largest aspects. That is, we must be able, first, to appreciate the mutual dependence of the successive factors of an art (the notes in music, the colours in painting, and the words in literature); and, secondly, to co-ordinate all of these dependent factors into a unified whole. The first relationship is established in music by tempo (or accent); in painting, by line (or outline); in literature, by cadence (or, in poetry, by metre). The second, and larger, coherence is dependent upon the tonality (or key) in music; upon the lighting (or tonality) in painting; and upon the thought in literature. The laws of progression and coherence are identical with the laws which govern all physiological and psychological activities, and are in harmony with our universal experience. In their present statement they are merely limited to the æsthetic principle.

## 74.

**QUANTITATIVE ANALOGIES IN THE DIFFERENT ARTS.**—After having established the psychological methods by which coherence is perceived in both its minor and its major aspects, it is neces-

sary to define the substance or the material upon which these laws are operative. The mere quantitative cohesion of a work of art has to do with sound in music; with volumes in painting; and with subject-matter (or document) in literature. These are the media of the arts; and once tempo (the delimitation of sound), line or outline (the delimitation of volume), and cadence or metre (the delimitation of words) have been applied to these media, we have specific shapes upon which to work. There is a perfect analogy between the themes (or phrases) in music, the forms in painting, and the episodes in literature (or the phrases in poetry). These are the material entities of the arts; and their larger co-ordination—i. e., their synthesis into a coherent whole—is brought about (in music) by a unity of tonality, or key; (in painting) by a unity of lighting, or tonality; and (in literature) by a unity of thought. Their organisation into a perfect plastic ensemble is accomplished by the introduction of æsthetic rhythm—poise, balance and symmetry.

## 75.

THE TWO TYPES OF COMPOSITION IN THE ARTS.—There are two types of composition in the arts. First, there is the simple block form of composition wherein all the parts are solidly related

and woven into a harmony which presents itself to our emotions as a complete and satisfying ensemble. This type may be likened to a hundred shapes of rocks and trees rising into the air and then suddenly coalescing into a unified, simultaneous impression of a mountain. The second and generally more complex type of composition is possessed of a rhythmic order which, while retaining the solidity and simultaneous order of the first, gives us the emotion of an eternally moving form, shifting and flowing, yet at the same time satisfying and final. This second type is the higher æsthetic form. The former is, to some extent, static and more primary, being merely the perfect conjunction of many parts into one full and united climax of ensemble effect; whereas the latter, though final and complete, evokes, by means of its wholly natural method of gestation, an emotion of continuous movement toward a climax which has already been reached. While perfectly ordered, it is conceived as an eternal becoming, like life itself: its beginning and end are synchronous. In music this style of composition is represented by the symphony's separate movements wherein a formal musical idea (in no matter how many figures divided) serves as the generator of the succeeding forms which evolve toward an apex and conclusion. But though each movement separately may be of the higher type

of natural rhythmic order, the four symphonic movements together are too widely spaced and emotionally contrasted to be more than a block-manifestation. The human mind is incapable of spanning their hiatuses of time and form, and of *feeling* them as parts of a same rhythm, although it may *recognise* them as such. The block order exists more purely in the fugue where a definite subject dominates, develops in a somewhat fixed and predetermined manner, and reverts at the end to a restatement. The fugue presents a subjective vision of circular form whose extent, shape and result are one, and whose finale and inception touch. The fugue's one motivating idea is the cause of this block form, because it creates a single type-atmosphere around a hub of thought. Opera music, which at its best embodies brilliant bits of both compositional types artificially joined by dull and forced passages, can be likened to a long frieze. A frieze is strung together on the thread of literary unity; and though it may be perfect in its parts, in its entirety it is without form. In literature we have, first, a kind of "theme with variations" which represents the block type of composition, and, secondly, the sequential development of ideas which constitutes the logical rhythmic order. In this latter type every new action is a result of what precedes it, just as in that music whose every form grows nat-

urally out of an initial one. Balzac at times represents this higher type of complexly ordered composition—the type in which an idea serves as a soil from which the story springs and grows. The biography of Lucien de Rubempré is one of the world's literary masterpieces for this reason; whereas *Père Goriot*, in which an idea is the hub around which the book circularly revolves, tends more to the block order. Conrad's *Nostromo* and *Lord Jim* belong to the fugue, or block, type of composition: they are developed statements of a theme—complete ideas whose end is, to a great extent, foreseen. *Youth* and *Victory*, however, grow naturally and sequentially, as man himself grows, from a nucleus to a maturity and climax. In painting, whose conception of composition has always been in advance of the other arts and of its own medium of development, these two types of composition are less difficult to determine. Primarily there can exist only a block-order in realistic pictures—that is, in pictures of naturalistically lighted landscape, still-lives, etc.—because the proportions and arrangements act as the dominating idea; and any æsthetic distortions or rearrangements serve only to tighten the relationship of objects or shapes already seen. Arbitrary arrangements of still-lives or landscapes which are painted without models are not realistic in the strict sense of the word, and are suscepti-

ble of rhythmicising. But to see the finest examples of rhythmic composition one must go to such men as Rubens, Renoir, Veronese and El Greco, most of whose compositional steps were dictated wholly by the logic of æsthetic evolution. These men, in painting realistic bodies without realistic lighting, cared so little for realism, as such, that they made use of allegorical animals and placed wings upon human beings merely in order to attain to a greater and purer order. They did not work toward a *climax of movement* but toward a *completion of movement*, and the formal order of their work was in no way connected with, or dictated by, the subject (or idea) treated.

## 76.

**COMPOSITION THE PRIMARY CONSIDERATION EVEN IN ANCIENT ART.**—It is difficult to make people believe that the great old masters were primarily interested in composition—that is, in the order of form—and that the subjects, or ideas, of their paintings constituted an æsthetic *arrière pensée*. But regard, for instance, *Saint Ignatius of Loyola Healing the Sick* and the *Last Judgment* of the Pinakothek. In the first canvas we find an almost frenzied rhythmic movement; and, in the second, there is a marked composi-

tional calm. The subjects of these canvases in no way influence the selection of such divergent organisational bases. The pictures attest to the fact that Rubens's *first consideration* was abstract form. The representative side of the pictures was wholly secondary, if not, indeed, incidental. The importance of these works lies, not in their subjects, but in their rhythmic presentation of form.

## 77.

**ILLUSTRATIVE AND AESTHETIC FUNCTIONING IN ART.**—The finality and satisfaction resulting from musical sound returning to the tonic are due to association inasmuch as a melody at bottom is a series of conversational inflections translated into the purity of notes. Illustrative music is merely a swinging or rhythmic oratory, wherein the words are abandoned for a more intensified vehicle of expression; and it is written for the purpose of giving an *emotional* and not an *aesthetic* effect. Illustrative painting of the better kind accomplishes the same end. It evokes scenes, characters, and atmospheres which are emotional but unesthetic. Likewise, literature which is created for the sole purpose of recording documentary information makes no aesthetic appeal. However, within all this illustrative ma-

terial, there exist formal potentialities which are susceptible of actualisation into an æsthetic entity. In music it is impossible to escape entirely from the oratorical form, for this is the form on which all music is primarily based; but if, instead of using notes merely for intensifying conversational experience, the composer regards them as a pure medium whose only restrictions are organisational, great music results. In this case, music does not hold to the *logic* of oratory; instead, the *inflection* of oratory is the means to an ordered end. The compositional shape is influenced solely by the consideration of completing the original form motive. Painting, following the same laws, uses, in its æsthetic capacity, natural forms (changed and shifted to meet the requirements of rhythmic composition) irrespective of their natural environmental logic. Literature, which necessarily deals in document even when æsthetically creative, bends the inevitable form of idea to a sequential order which becomes subjectively solid. Thus, in music, the character of human conversation is utilised for complete formal achievements. In painting, æsthetic enjoyment depends on the approximation of the forms to the balance of the human body. And, in literature, the formal justness is dictated by the psychology of logic and penetration.

## 78.

THE AESTHETIC *RATIONALE*.—Do not consider the arts as isolated and independent, each governed by its own laws. The laws which apply to one art will apply with equal fitness to any other art. What is basically true of one art is true of all the others: seek for the æsthetic analogy. Precisely the same reactions are expressed by painting, music and literature; and these reactions are expressed in the same æsthetic manner. Only the media differ. You cannot know one art *à fond* without knowing all the others; or, to state the proposition conversely, it is necessary to know all the arts fundamentally before you can truly grasp one of them. The emotional effects of the various arts are superficially dissimilar; but the principles do not vary.

## 79.

ANALOGIES BETWEEN THE ARTS.—There is no abstract quality of a rhythmic nature in any one art which does not have an analogy in the other arts. Because music was the first art to become abstract, we have an æsthetic musical nomenclature; and generally it is necessary to use musical terms in describing corresponding qualities in literature, drawing, painting and sculpture.

## 80.

**MELODY.**—Melody is the simplest form of art which has passed beyond mere primitive rhythm. It is common to all the arts, for though it has a definite musical connotation, it may be applied figuratively to the other arts. Melody is merely rhythm applied to two-dimensional form—auditory, visual or documentary. The form-essence of pure melody is linear. In drawing or painting it is commonly called decoration or design. In literature it is the simple tale which has been delicately composed. Pure musical melody exists without accompaniment: it is a series of single notes. Its parallel in the graphic arts is a line drawing in which the linear cadence is the final effect sought for. In literature it is the episodic story.

## 81.

**HOMOPHONY.**—Homophony is the structural augmentation of melody, or melody resting on its bases of chord sequences: melody with an accompaniment. The analogy of homophony in the graphic arts would be a linear drawing, or painting, to which were added masses or volumes of tonality—light and dark or coloured patches which sustained and accorded with the linear directions. The chords, or bases, on which a mel-

ody rests—or, more accurately, the remainders of the broken-up chords from which the melody was lifted—correspond to the tonal masses in two-dimensional drawing or painting. In literature the effect of homophony is obtained in a more arbitrary manner. If to the simple episodic story, such as a folk tale or a Boccaccio *novella*, should be added a foundation of descriptive or historical material which augmented and filled out the narrative without altering its formal development, the result would correspond to musical homophony.

## 82.

**POLYPHONY.**—Polyphony is three-dimensional auditory form into which has been introduced rhythm. During the interweaving of two or more melodies, the musical form is multilinear and moves in depth as well as laterally or “vertically.” Here the masses and volumes are made up of the extensional relationships of the numerous melodic lines, and are an integral part of the aesthetic structure. The dominant melody represents merely that surface of the form which is most evident to the ear, in the same way that a certain aspect of a painted form is most apparent to the eye. There are parallels for polyphony in literature and painting. A book which possesses documentary solidity and which has been composed

rhythmically in accord with æsthetic development, is—figuratively—polyphonic. The plot is merely the dominant melody, and bears the same relation to the whole that the dominant melody bears to the complete form of a polyphonic piece of music. In drawing there can be no polyphony because black and white cannot give the emotion of depth. But in painting where the linear forms relate themselves rhythmically to one another in three dimensions we have an exact analogy to musical polyphony. Here, too, there may be a dominant linear melody.

## 83.

**SIMULTANEITY IN ART.**—Although the perception of beauty—that is, of form—is never simultaneous, since it requires a series of movements and necessitates a process of comparison and adjustments which can be made only by the act of memory and shape-projection, nevertheless the *effect of beauty* is simultaneous. It may take us an hour or more to absorb or to find the æsthetic form, as in listening to a symphony, or in reading a book, or in studying the ramifications of a picture's composition; but when we have followed the lines of the form to their completion and are conscious of the unity of their direction and interrelations, we receive, in an immeasurably brief

instant of time, the unified effect of the whole. It is like a sudden flash: our memory has retained and built up accumulatively all that has taken place during our long process of absorption or comprehension. If, while we are listening to a perfectly constructed sonata, it should suddenly cease at the beginning of the coda, let us say, we would be left with a feeling of incompleteness: we would fail to react to its form. The same sensation or feeling of incompleteness would be ours if we closed a book when part way through it, or if we regarded a picture which was partially concealed. In all such cases we would have curtailed our contemplation during the process of absorption; and our æsthetic reaction would not fully take place. That which is necessary for our complete satisfaction is the very last note or chord of a piece of music, the final episode in a book, and the ultimate curve or volume in a picture's organisational scheme. When we have reached this final point in a work of art, our memory, which has retained every step through which our consciousness has passed in the contemplative process, reconstructs the whole. We then have an instantaneous vision of the entire form which may have taken hours to unroll. In that instant of realisation we receive our keenest sense of beauty, for in that instant we react to a formal unity. This sudden coalescence of memory constitutes

the *simultaneity* which characterises all æsthetically constructed art works.

#### 84.

THE PRIMITIVE DEMAND FOR SYMMETRY.—In the perception of form we always relate that form to ourselves—that is, to the conditions of our own bodily consciousness. Perceiving form necessitates certain muscular, auditory or optical activities on our part; and the character of the form regulates those activities. Thus, in looking at a flagpole, our eyes *must* travel up and down: we cannot perceive the flagpole by moving our eyes to the right or left. All forms therefore produce in us certain corresponding movements; or rather, our movements, since they are voluntary and active, determine the form. Now, since our consciousness of bodily existence is based on an ever-present sense of balance (our ability to stand without falling), it is our instinct, when making a muscular movement which would tend to destroy that balance, to make a counter-motion for the purpose of preserving our equilibrium. The involuntary adjustments of the body have for their purpose a balance of weights which will be equal on either side of our centre of gravity. In the contemplation of form the same process takes place, since it is our movements which

determine form perception. For example, draw a heavy line to the left of the centre of a piece of paper. We feel an incompleteness when viewing it: we are not at ease. Then draw a similar line to the right of the paper's centre. At once we feel a completion, a sense of satisfaction. This is because we relate all perceived form to a centre of gravity; and if this form is not balanced by another form, we undergo a process of mental adjustment (analogous to physical adjustment) by *desiring* the other form. In other words, we *feel a need* of a counter-form. It is our internal and involuntary demand for balance. Hence the static and primitive satisfaction we experience in the presence of symmetry, or symmetrical designs; and the dissatisfaction we experience before an unsymmetrical or lop-sided design.

## 85.

**AUDITORY SYMMETRY.**—Sound-forms are perceived in the same manner that visual forms are perceived. There are auditory adjustments analogous to optical adjustments; and, at bottom, they are, no doubt, muscular, since we vocalise sounds while listening to them, although this vocalisation may be silent. In short, sound-forms are determined by our own physical movements. And in the same manner that we relate visual forms

to a centre of gravity, and consider the extension of those forms as so far to the right or left, so we relate tone-masses to a centre of musical gravity. This centre is the vocal mean of the human voice. Thus we have standardised middle C (the C on the first line below the treble); and all other notes are either *upper* or *lower notes*. Middle C, the centre of musical gravity, is that point where the bass clef runs into the treble clef. For clarity, let us say that all notes (save middle C) are either to the right or left of this musical centre. Unconsciously, we relate all notes to this centre, (their height or depth is judged by their distance from middle C); and if the sound-forms are not balanced on either side of it (like visual forms on either side of a centre of gravity), we feel a dissatisfaction similar to the physical sensation of being unbalanced. Thus a chord or a note (a sound-form) struck in the treble or bass calls up in us at once a need for a chord or note in the opposite clef. This, again, is our primitive demand for balance based on physical consciousness. When the *seen* forms on either side of a centre of gravity counterbalance each other in the static sense, we have visual symmetry. And when the *heard* forms on either side of middle C—the centre of musical gravity—counterbalance each other statically, we have auditory symmetry. The felt need for both is due, first, to the fact that

equilibrium is our basis of physical consciousness, and, secondly, to the further fact that our perception of form—whether visual or auditory—is the result of physical movements which, when they take place either to the right or left of a pivotal centre, demand corresponding movements on the other side in order that the balance be maintained.

## 86.

**BALANCE OF ALL ELEMENTS IN A WORK OF ART.**—In a work of art there is a balance, or an approximation to stability, of linear directions, volumes and tonal masses.

## 87.

**LINEAR BALANCE.**—A balance of lines—or an approximation to a stability of lines—in a drawing or painting means that the average of their oppositional directions equals a perpendicular drawn from the bottom-centre to the top-centre of a canvas.

## 88.

**BALANCE OF TONAL VALUES.**—The perfection of a picture depends largely on the tonal symmetry, namely, the balance of light and dark values. The approximation of these values to a stability

of tone is quite as necessary to æsthetic satisfaction as is the approximation of lines to a stability of balance. This tonal balance means that the sum total of black and white values equals perfect grey—that is, the exact tone of neutrality which lies half way between black and white. (In a scale of eighty-four notes from black to white the centre, or neutral mean, varies no more than seven tones, or three and a half to either side.) Thus on a canvas of exact neutral grey, two squares of the same dimensions, one perfect black and the other perfect white, will exactly balance each other if placed in symmetrical opposition on either side of the centre of the canvas. When the background is raised from exact neutral grey to a tone nearer white, the opposition on the white side lessens; and, as it lessens, the dimension of the white square must be increased in ratio to the tonal raising of the background; and *vice versa* in the case of the black square, should the background be lowered in tone.

## 89.

**BALANCE OF SOUND.**—The balance of sound in musical compositions is subject to the same law as tonal values. However, there is this difference: there is no background in music in the strict sense of the word; the form exists, as it were, in noth-

ingness. Therefore it is necessary to consider notes solely in relation to one another. Thus the length of vibrations of notes is analogous to the surface dimensions of black and white masses in drawing. When, on the background of silence, or absence of vibration, we strike the fifth note above middle C with the fifth note below middle C, we are immediately struck by the overwhelming preponderance of the bass note, caused by its slower vibration. Therefore, in order to counteract the preponderating bass which results from striking notes equidistant from middle C, we must progress, not by a ratio of distance (as in linear symmetry), but by a ratio of vibration. Glance at the score of any good piece of piano music, and you will immediately see the preponderance of notes in the treble which are necessary to counterbalance the actual sound volume of the longer vibrating notes in the bass. Hence: In music, a stability of sound (or an auditory balance) means that the average of vibrations of all the notes will equal middle C.

## 90.

**BALANCE OF COLOURS.**—The problem of colour balance is different from both that of tonal stability and that of auditory stability. The col-

our spectrum runs from hot to cold, through very warm, warm, cool, very cool, and all the intervening degrees of temperature. And not only must the minute parts of the picture be balanced as to hot and cold—epitomised by complementary tints exactly balancing every element in each other's composition; but this balance must also be strictly adhered to in the general composition of the picture. In canvases where the colour is preponderantly hot we experience a dissatisfaction on account of their "scorched" appearance; and a dissatisfied feeling obtains when the colour runs into the blues, greens and purples. Subjective colour satisfaction, which is the equal distribution of cold and hot as is represented in nature by the contrast between direct light and shadow cast, is obtainable only by a painter who possesses an extreme sensitivity in regard to chromatic values. When colours are applied to equally balanced squares on a neutral grey background the result is the same as with black and white, provided the two colours are exact complementaries. The squares, however, must undergo a process of disproportionment according, and in ratio, to the background's being drawn toward the hot or cold end of the spectrum. Hence: Colour balance means that the sum total of all the colours in a picture must equal the chromatic temperature which lies half way between the spectral extremes;

or, in other words, the colours must constitute the equivalent of two perfect complementaries.

## 91.

**RHYTHM.**—Rhythm is symmetry in movement. The perception of rhythm is due to the fundamental recognition of equal and consecutive events or reactions: that is, to the infinite iteration of balance which is at once started when motion is conferred on symmetry. Thus when a static, symmetrical figure or design is overbalanced on one side, it calls for a counterbalancing movement in the opposite direction equal to the first movement: and this second position at once demands another opposite movement like the first, and so on indefinitely. Here we arrive at the psychological basis for the principle of periodicity. (The same basis may be advanced for the perception-reflex and its continuous reactions in our nervous systems until interrupted or interfered with by other more intense stimuli.) These succeeding and equally spaced beats are not equal in intensity when perceived, even though they may be scientifically the same. The mind registers, through the ear, cycles of sound, for the realisation of *rhythm* is a realisation of moving symmetry, and unless we kept track, as it were, of the alternating complementaries, we could

not determine the swaying balance. Listen to a clock ticking: count the ticks *one-two, one-two, one-two*; then count them *one-two-three, one-two-three, one-two-three*; then count them *one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four, one-two-three-four*. In every instance the accent will fall on the *one*. Beyond four the human mind cannot rhythmically go because of the necessity for complete cycles; and the duration of single rhythmic conceptions, while varying in individuals, is limited to two seconds in even extreme cases. (In music where we have six-eight time, for instance, the psychological effect is three-four time doubled. Hexameter verse is unmusical; and septameter divides itself to us into tetrameter and trimeter. In pentameter there is always a rest, or silent cadence, at the end of the lines which breaks the effect into two trimeters.) A single cycle of beats is not complete, nor does it give us an emotion of completion: we feel the need of other cycles to balance it. It does not represent an entire movement, and must be counteracted by another cycle. Though composed of beat-integers which balance one another, it becomes an entity and, in turn, needs another entity to balance it. When this larger balance is obtained we have another entity which demands a further and still larger balance. This process of compounded rhythm continues until the rhythms are so far separated that we

cannot *feel* them but must connect them by an intellectual process. The four movements of the symphony, while recognisable as a cycle of movement, are too widely separated to be grasped emotionally. But in the philosophical determination of art we must not limit our conception of rhythm to what may be immediately experienced. The hours, days, seasons and years are rhythmic cycles. All life is an expression of these recurring cycles—that is, of rhythmic movement in space. And art's interpretative value lies in the fact that it can condense the macrocosmic cycles into a microcosm which will symbolise those great alternating rhythms of life, and make them susceptible of immediate perception, whereas, naturally, they are only recognisable.

## 92.

**THE DEMAND FOR COMMON RHYTHM.**—The demand for symmetry is an expression of the primitive need of static balance. It is the first consciousness of existing. A child learns first to balance itself upright; hence its initial sensation is symmetry. Later, movement is introduced into this symmetry, and locomotion is acquired. The æsthetic consciousness develops similarly, for we must not lose sight of the fact that art is the expression and projection of life. Herein lies its great philosophic value. It is the reduction

of all life to a perfectly composed miniature world. Therefore the reaction to symmetry is anthropomorphically prior to the reaction of movement. Later this symmetry is set into simple action: there is regular alternation of balance—a swaying to one side immediately counterbalanced by a swaying to the other side. The primitive art, which followed the making of symmetrical designs, balanced these designs after the manner of the human body walking. Music was entirely a matter of rhythm, accentuated by the tapping of drums. Still later the rhythms became complicated according to the evolution of bodily movements—running, hopping, skipping, dancing, and so forth. Stimulations of impacts and stress resulted in emphasis on one foot or the other. Because of this rhythmic basis in all consciousness of movement, there exists necessarily a simple rhythm in every work of art which has passed beyond mere symmetry.

## 93.

ÆSTHETIC RHYTHM.—There is, of course, in all great art, an underlying and all-embracing rhythm which determines the microcosmic life of the work. This profounder rhythm (which, because of the paucity of art nomenclature, we must call æsthetic rhythm) is the result of the

perfect organisation of all the qualities of art—linear direction, balance and volume. It has nothing to do with rhythm in the ordinary sense, with tempo, with alternate swaying of curved lines, with action, or with metrics. It is a complete cycle of poised movement presented as a simultaneous vision; and the change of the smallest part would completely alter every constituent. Thus a person may walk or dance rhythmically (in the narrower sense); but one of Michelangelo's slaves, which actually is static, possesses the profounder æsthetic rhythm, for within it is embodied every possible phase of ordinary rhythm of the human body, perfectly related and organised. Likewise a popular piece of dance music may possess rhythm; whereas Brahms's *Fourth Symphony* embodies in its four movements a complete world of rhythmic poise which gives itself to the auditor only when the cycle is complete—at the instant the final chord is struck. Again, we find in Swinburne's *Dolores* a melodious rhythm which sweeps us along on its surface; but in Balzac's *Illusions Perdues* we possess a great example of æsthetic rhythm which is developed by the perfect organisation of documentary form. Ordinary rhythm extends itself wholly into time, and is the repetition of alternating lines, points or accents. *Æsthetic* rhythm is poise in three dimensions, wherein all the extremes of movement

are related to a centre of gravity, giving us the sense of complete satisfaction.

#### 94.

  
THE BASIS OF RHYTHM.—Simple rhythm, although apparently an alternating movement between two points, is in reality either an actual or implied relation between four points, lines or forms. For, when symmetry is set in motion, there is at once a displacement of balance, and the mind immediately supplies that displacement with an imaginary placement. It is this alternation between a form and a void and again between a void and a form that constitutes the conception of four movements—that is, two alternating sets of two movements each. Nearly all rhythm, however, is an actual alternation between two sets of similar forms; and this gives us the inevitable basis of four, or multiples of four. No true rhythm can exist otherwise. Thus the body while walking constitutes the source of our perception of rhythm, just as it constitutes the source of all æsthetic reaction. The arms sway back and forth alternately; the legs likewise move alternately back and forth; and the alternating movement of the arms at the same time alternates with the alternating movements of the legs. We will find this same law of four in all works of art

which give us a complete and satisfactory sense of rhythm. "Common" time in music is four-four time (four beats to the measure). A simple musical melody contains sixteen measures, or four alternating phrases of four bars each. Nearly all musical compositions are founded on the multiple of four; and the few attempts at five-four time, or at adding an uneven number of bars, have resulted in a feeling of dissatisfaction or incompleteness. The basal compositional structure of all great paintings or sculptures will be found to abide by this simple rhythmic law. The most satisfying type of poetry is written in tetrameter; and it has four lines with alternating rhymes. When we seek for the larger rhythmic movements—the æsthetic rhythm—of art, we find the same law holding good. In the sonata, or symphony—the most perfect type of musical composition—the four movements are more obvious than in the other arts. But the movements are there, none the less. It is inevitable that this should be so, for these are the movements of consciousness; and all great art must be related to the human body in movement.

## 95.

**WALTZ, OR THREE-FOUR, TIME.**—The reason that waltz, or three-four, time is commonly regarded as the most sensuous tempo, that is, the

tempo to which we respond with the most complete physical reaction, is because there is in such tempo the alternation of emphasis as well as of mere movement. The human mind, during the process of auditory perception, makes rhythmic divisions between sound-forms. This is because one note, when heard, creates a need for another note; and these two notes constitute a sound-form or an extension or direction of sound-form. If the form is complete, the mind begins with the third note (provided there has been an interval) to construct another form or a further form extension. Thus we instinctively emphasise the first note in a sound-form in order to differentiate the succeeding forms. That is why whenever we hear a regular tapping of any kind we always unconsciously hear every other tap as if it were a little louder than the tap which follows it. We will inevitably lay stress on the first beat of a sound-form. In music this stress or emphasis is indicated by bar-division; and we count *one-two*, *one-two-three*, or *one-two-three-four*, according to the tempo. But always the emphasis will be placed on the *one*, or the first beat in the measure. Our bodies naturally move in accordance with the tempo: it is the movement of the body which in the first place necessitated the emphasis. Therefore, in two-four or four-four time the emphasis of movement will always

fall on one side of the body, since our rhythmic movement is always from side to side even when walking or running. But in three-four time the emphasis alternates from one side of the body to the other, because the number of notes in the sound group is an odd number. For instance, if we should walk in step to three-four time the stress would fall first on the left and then on the right, or *vice versa*. Therefore, in moving rhythmically to three-four time there is a swaying movement to which both sides of the body react alternately and equally, thus giving us a permeating sense of complete physical reaction.

## 96.

DOCUMENTARY SOLIDITY IN LITERATURE.—All great works of art must embody a definite logic (dependent on the spectator's or auditor's memory and sense of actuality) which will cause an action, a tone, a colour, a line, or a note to be experienced as inevitable and right. This just placement of every æsthetic element makes for the truth (in the sense of inner consistency) of an art work. The mere statement in literature, for instance, that a character performed a certain act does not create for the reader the experience of the character's action; nor does it, in the æsthetic meaning of "experience," give the

reader a complete and all-enveloping vision of the character performing that act. Indeed, the reader only conditionally accepts the writer's statement (just as a spectator accepts the drop-curtain of a theatre as a landscape or an interior), and awaits the proof or logic which will force him to feel the truth of the statement. Now, in order for such a statement to be accepted as true, the author is necessitated to give the reason for the particular act, to describe the circumstances surrounding it, to explain the character's temperament, nature, mode of life, his antecedents, and his ability to counteract environment and heredity. Only then will the stated act stand as a solid and consistent fact—the possible, even inevitable, result of instincts, circumstances and surroundings. In other words, such a statement cannot appear as a logical visualisation which will cause the reader to feel as the character is supposed to feel and to accept the action as a link in a temperamental process, unless the writer has constructed his story by that imaginative sensitivity which results in fundamental verisimilitude. And this verisimilitude is dependent not only on the writer's ability to seize the essentials of character and environment, but on his insight into psychological causes which *result naturally* in the character's action. By setting down this knowledge in the manner that

nature creates, the writer makes the action appear as a part of an organised delineation which the reader feels cannot be otherwise. This is the primary literary and artistic solidity which produces in the reader, after the narrative is finished, the feeling that he himself has experienced the recorded events, has thought the thoughts of the characters, and has personally passed through an odyssey of action and contemplation. Herein lies the tactile possibilities of a work of literature. Such a work radically differs from those stories which the reader remembers only as having been pleasantly related as a series of external events. The same effect of logical justness and truth is brought about, in a similar manner, by the painter and the musician. The painter, confronted by the need of filling spaces, must choose the right line, colour or tone. The line must lean in a direction, the colour must be of a shade, and the tone must be of a purity, which will be inevitable in the ensemble. They must be, not only the result of environmental colours, lines and tones, but the determining basis of other colours, lines and tones which are to follow, and which, together with all that has been set down before, will be viewed simultaneously. The musical composer adheres to the same constructional process. Were he to alter the logical character or direction of phrases, they would cease to be

felt as true, because they would no longer be the inevitable result of what had preceded them: they would become detached and chaotic. On this sensitive solidity of artistic, and at bottom physical, logic, is based all the laws of harmony. No amount of detail in literature can bring about this emotional, inner solidity. It goes deeper than the *representation* of solidity, for it is created, not by the correct and meticulous setting down of data or actual facts, but by the natural inevitability of cause and effect, expressed by salient points of its evolutionary process.

## 97.

ORGANISED MUSICAL SOLIDITY.—Organised musical solidity is the perfect conjunction of sound and rhythm.

## 98.

ORGANISED SOLIDITY IN PAINTING.—Organised solidity in painting is the unique vision of colour and form.

## 99.

ORGANISATION OF LITERARY SOLIDITY.—In addition to the documentary solidity of literature there must also be a solidity of style, or method. Thus is a literary work made plastic. The rhythm

and word-sounds must be perfectly harmonised. When an author creates for us a character whose life we feel and live in the reading, he has shown himself to be possessed of great and conscious imagination. He has, however, given us only an attenuated vision. But when the expression of this character results not alone from the document filling its rôle of narration, but also from the inevitable choice of words, the structure of the sentences and paragraphs,—then the author has given us supreme art. He has adapted his form to his expression as well as his expression to his form; and we have a unique vision of presentational method and subject-matter. There is a perfect concord between all the separate elements.

## 100.

**AUXILIARY LINES.**—One colour, or one musical note, merely *implies* form, as does one side of a rectangular block, for instance. We assume some kind of a form, since in the single colour or note we have one surface or limitation of a relative form. But with two or more colours or notes we possess an actual extension of form, for our senses connect them, attributing a dimension to the space or *néant* between them: we assume a line—that is, a direction—leading from one to the

other. The intervening space (provided the colours or tones are not actually in conjunction) takes on the character of form: it ceases to be nothing, and becomes something. Thus the white space between colours is imaginatively filled in with all the degrees of tone or shading which separate them; and the silence, or rest, or interval between notes is filled in imaginatively with that portion of the chromatic scale which divides them. In literature, the same principle obtains. Two events in the life of a character are recorded; and we at once assume or supply the intervening events. In the construction of æsthetic form the artist either leaves these blanks as they are or fills them in, according to the need of straight or curved directions in the scheme of his organisation. When the connections are omitted we have the straight direction, for the eye or mind or ear jumps from one colour, note or episode to another, taking the shortest possible route. But when the intervening space is filled in (as by the slur in music, the gradation of the colours in painting, and the minute record of details in literature), we have a curved line, since all the intervening notes, colours and documentary minutiae have an individual character which leads the eye or ear or mind into its own separate extensions in space and time.

## 101.

**SPACE INTERVAL IN MUSIC AND LINE IN PAINTING.**—The space intervals between notes correspond to line, or delimitation of volumes, in painting. Notes are, as it were, strung on time spaces; and it is the parallel repetitions of these spaces which endow a musical composition with its purely physical homogeneity. Forms on lines produce the same effect in painting. Thus, if twelve chromatic notes are struck simultaneously, there is no sensation of time endurance; but if they are struck successively with small intervals, immediately there is evoked a feeling of line in the listener. Separate colours placed in juxtaposition over a whole canvas do not give the sensation of form, but of volume. Introduce line into the mass—that is, delimit these colours—and they will at once become form. Hence: it is line which brings form out of volume, and space intervals which bring melody (or musical form) out of notes. Furthermore, just as the perception of music is dependent on time extension (or space interval), so is all painting, the old as well as the new, dependent on line for its effect. Line welds every part of a picture into a unified whole; and spaces similarly weld all musical volumes. This welding process constitutes the superficial rhythm which is the body of the expression. It

does not, however, constitute the generating rhythm: this last results from deeper causes.

## 102.

**LINE SUBSIDIARY TO VOLUME.**—A line, *per se*, cannot give us the feeling that it extends from our eyes into space or toward us, although it may suggest what we already know concerning a depicted form. A line is only a surface method of hinting at volume. Its ability to become three-dimensional depends upon the colours in painting and the notes in music. It must therefore always be deputy to volume, and its solidity dependent upon the medium employed. In our contemplating a drawn line it may, at first, appear to recede at one point and to advance at another. But if we reverse the paper or look a while longer it will seem to bulge where before it appeared concave, and *vice versa*. This transformation, however, will not take place when colours are applied to the line in their volumear precision, nor even when individual colours are placed on a neutral-tinted background.

## 103.

**LINEAR DRAWING ONLY SIGNIFICANT WHEN DEPICTING RECOGNISABLE OBJECTS.**—To state

that form can be intensely felt only when expressed by colour, and then to speak of the powerful emotion of absolute form to be had before a Michelangelo drawing, would seem to constitute a contradiction. But here is the explanation: Line, as an abstract medium, can be significant only when it expresses objects which we are at no pains to recognise, for only then is it capable of giving us the emotion of three-dimensional solidity. This solidity, however, is not the result of a line's ability to move us subjectively. Indeed, a line's greatest power lies in its being able to indicate the surface rhythm which corresponds to tempo in music. A great drawing of the human body is only suggestive of form and expressive of rhythm. It is our *associative faculty* which tells us that the form is three-dimensional; and it is our susceptibility to linear surface rhythm, combining with this associative faculty, which produces in us an emotion of beautiful and full form. The fact that these two elements of perception are not fully amalgamated is brought out when we look at a drawing and a painting of the same picture—a Cézanne, for instance. The drawing, when viewed side by side with the painting, is felt to be unsatisfactory; but when it is viewed alone, this feeling vanishes. The painting contains all the linear and tonal beauty of the drawing, besides giving to them, by

means of colour, a new and fuller life of abstract and volumear form.

#### 104.

SUBJECTIVE SOLIDITY OF SCULPTURE.—Although sculpture is presented to us through the medium of an impenetrable substance on which we may bruise our bodies, only in the case of great sculpture is it impossible to dematerialise it subjectively with our emotions. In the work of Rodin, for instance, who is generally conceded to be a marvellous modeller and a master of his material, only occasionally do we come upon details which create in us a satisfaction of solidity. This is because Rodin has never achieved a plastic ensemble. On the other hand, some of the half-finished, barely limned statues of Michelangelo are perfections of solidity in the subjective sense. Often Rodin is more lifelike than Michelangelo, more “right” in drawing, more truly objective, for frequently Michelangelo is deformed, foreshortened and distorted out of academic semblance to the human body. Yet before him we feel an æsthetic satisfaction. And the reason lies fundamentally in the balance—in the alternating rhythm between the parts and the whole, the sequential projection of even the minutest details into the character of the whole.

**LITERATURE AND SCULPTURE.**—While painting and music each have an abstract element of subjective form (the first, colour; the second, sound), literature and sculpture deal alone with the media in which they are expressed, and are inspired by their replicas in objective life. Literature is a matter of formalising precise ideas, with all the ramifications of thought which this process implies. It is document, inspired by document and given homogeneous form. It has, to be sure, the subjective element of visualisable form; but this element is not itself the result of an objective stimulus, as is colour in painting, and sound in music. Sculpture deals with actual form, and is inspired by actual form as well. It also has a subjective element of solidity dependent on its order. But this solidity, like the form of literature, is not the result of an abstract element (such as colour or sound) whose formal effect is subjective. Literature and sculpture are the direct arts, and deal with specific facts, precise objective ideas and precise objective forms. Were the field of sculptural shapes as broad as the field of ideas, sculpture could keep pace with literature. But its field is definitely limited, and when, in the art of Michelangelo, it had exhausted its plastic possibilities, it was merged into painting and

given another element in the generating line. To-day this element has also been exhausted, and, as a consequence, sculpture is dead. The sculptor of to-day, like the modern architect, can only restate or vary Michelangelo's art. But literature, having a wider scope and having learned the lessons of music and painting, has taken a nobler lease of life. It has acquired elements which make it practically a new art.

## 106.

**FIXED FORMS IN THE DIFFERENT ARTS.**—Set forms in art are the evolutionary choices which both inspire to creation and restrain within fixed limits that same creation. Thus there exists many fixed forms in all the arts, such as the sonnet and the villanelle in poetry, the four-part sonata and the fugue in music, and the human body in painting and sculpture. To-day the artist is rebelling against these fixed moulds because they have been filled perfectly and no longer offer a new problem or a new emotion to the creator. All such forms, no matter how perfectly conceived, are in the manner of exercises for the artist. They exist until the creative will develops them or passes beyond them to new ones. When the art instinct expands, the medium and the expression expand with it. Not until the old forms

become too small or restricted for the artistic contents do the boundaries recede. The different forms of poetry underwent this metamorphosis; and new forms and metres were constantly brought into being. Beethoven liberated the minuet as a part of the symphony, calling the new and freer movement the *scherzo*. Courbet and Manet made subject-matter in painting arbitrary, thereby permitting a free selection of theme. To-day formal boundaries are receding in all the arts. The heretofore loose ends of knowledge are being gathered together, and the unrest at restricting barriers has brought about an expansion of these barriers. Only those whose limited vision cannot reach even the frontiers of other days are crying anarchy.

## 107.

**Two KINDS OF DRAMATIC FORM.**—The technique and the form of the drama are two separate and distinct qualities, although of late technique has come to be considered dramatic form. It is, however, no more than the superficial garb in which the true form is clothed, and is without value save to the producer and the theatrical mechanician. This technical “form” is a surface convention dependent on the needs of the existing stage. It has passed through a series of evolution, until now it bears small resemblance

to its original character. Technique concerns itself largely with certain arbitrary "units" of time and place, dramatic sequences, divisions of actions (called "acts") or divisions of locale (called "scenes"), the possibilities of stage construction, the rise and fall of dialogue interest, suspense, the logic of exits and entrances, the so-called psychology of effects, the "planting" of properties, the duration of time, and all such minor and artistically nugatory considerations. There has grown up a school of modern technicians whose influence has been to turn dramatic judgment into a contemplation of these external factors. The Greek drama, we are told, lacks form; and even Shakespeare is set down as a man woefully deficient in dramatic knowledge: his form has become obsolete! Even in our own day we have seen many vital changes come over dramatic "form." Soliloquies have been done away with. The number of acts has been reduced. The climax, or *dénouement*, has been moved forward to the end of the last act, so that the ascension of interest might be preserved. By such subterfuges, tricks and arbitrary "laws of dramaturgy" do our modern critics presume to judge the drama! But since these laws are constantly changing to meet the needs of a vulgar public or the demands of imaginative stage carpenters, a drama which was excellent as "form" yesterday is set aside to-day

as worthless, and the plays we praise to-day will be met with scorn and contempt by the critics of to-morrow. But what our present-day technicians overlook is that what they call "form" is only a transient aspect of the drama. True dramatic form is a far deeper quality—a definite and eternal flux and reflux of document, wholly unrelated to the superficial "form" on which so much emphasis is now laid. And it is this inner activity of subject-matter which determines for all time the artistic worth of a play. In fact, the laws of modern construction not seldom work directly against the inner form, distorting and disproportioning it to coincide with some superficial rule of presentation. The important and basic content of a drama is thus left to get along as best it can, while the superficial moulding into shape goes on relentlessly in accordance with the needs of theatrical trickery. A truly great drama is possessed of this inner form, and seldom abides by the "laws" of the modern technicians, for æsthetic form cannot be created if it is restricted by petty rules. On the other hand, we have many plays which are technically nearly perfect, but not one of them is great. Herein we have an explanation for the greatness of Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, of Goethe's *Faust*, of Sophocles's *Œdipus Rex*, of Molière's *Tartuffe*, of Racine's *Phèdre*, and of Corneille's *Polyeucte*. These

dramas are, and always will be, mammoth examples of dramatic form in the true and enduring sense of the word, because their form is æsthetic and has to do with the internal substance. They are authentic pieces of irrevocable dramatic art. They will be great plays when Shaw, Pinero, Bernstein and the other little masters of modern technical efficiency have been forgotten. The man who writes for the stage of to-day is doomed. In the past when there were few rules to hinder the playwright it was different; but a modern artist cannot serve both his art and the requirements of dramatic law-makers. The theatre, as it is constituted to-day, is an enemy of true art form, for its demands nullify all æsthetic creation. That is why there is no dramatic art in the present age. The one contemporary dramatist who approaches æsthetic greatness is Hauptmann; and our critics are constantly complaining of his “formlessness.”

## 108.

THE FUTURE PROSE.—The art of literature, like all the other arts, is heading straight for a purification of its medium, which will result in an intensification of its emotional power. Heretofore the writing of prose has seemed so natural an occupation that thousands who are without

any genuine æsthetic equipment have adopted it as a life work. These persons, many with large literary reputations, would, if put to the test, be incapable of defining the difference between literature *as an art*, and those writings wherein a smooth and fluent stylist has merely produced pure and moving document. Yet there now exists a vast difference between the two; and in twenty-five years there will be a still greater chasm between them. The poet can suggest certain vague emotions solely by means of particular kinds of metre. But this method is rudimentary. Single words, by their tone qualities and onomatopœic suggestions, possess the same power of precise expression. Also, the æsthetic significance of ensemble forms has never been fully realised. These qualities will be skilfully and sensitively organised in the writings of the future; and the literary architecture of the novel and the short story will be as difficult to construct and as subjectively solid when finished as the dome of St. Peter's. Only then, when all the potential qualities which are at the disposal of the creators of great literature shall have been recognised and mastered, will the writer's medium be sufficiently plastic and complete to permit of full freedom of expression. We will then be able to distinguish the true literary artist from the merely skilful documentarian.

## 109.

**DOCUMENTARY COHERENCE IN LITERATURE.**—All æsthetic creation is progression, for without progression there can be no coherence; and form confers coherence on progression. Successive parts of an art work are held together by a unity of intent or purpose; and this unity of intent—whether document, sound, or colour—can be preserved only by the medium of æsthetic form. The attempt of certain ultra-modern anarchs to divorce document from literature can result only in disintegration, for it is document which supplies the coherent structure to literature. Without it the mind is incapable of synthesising the word symbols or of appreciating even their immediate interrelations.

## 110.

**POETRY.**—That which distinguishes poetry from prose is its metrical articulation, its rhythmical progression and its cadential relationships. Poetry, therefore, is, next to music, the most physical of the arts. Its primary appeal is its bodily rhythm—its dance element; and because of its primitive reiteration of tempo, it is unfitted for any expression save the simplest and most spontaneous kind. The most effective poetry is that which adheres to the presentation of im-

agery: in this it is closely allied æsthetically to the art of dancing. Like dancing, it is intellectual only in limited degree. The evolution of poetry is in the development of rhythm and the intensification of the image. That is why, when it reached a state of impressive purity in Swinburne, there was a psychological reaction—a disintegration of poetry into all manner of theoretical schools. New experimental eras always follow the culmination of cycles of endeavour, after a period of stagnancy has been passed. It was the same in painting. Rubens closed a cycle; then came an unproductive interregnum, and Delacroix, Daumier and Courbet ushered in a new experimental era. But whereas the *means* of painting had not been exhausted in Rubens, the means of poetry had been fully probed by Swinburne; and this fact accounts for the poverty and ineptitude of the so-called “new” poetry. What has actually happened is this: the “new” poetry has become prose, and its experimentations in means will aid the development of prose and not poetry. Although the ultra-modern lyricists insist that there is no definite line of demarcation between prose and poetry, it is still necessary to define our terms if we would avoid infinite confusion and endless arguments. The fact is that the best of the modern free-versifiers (whose aim has been to supplant metre with cadence) are

writing no better prose than can be found in a score of eminent stylists who have never considered their work as poetry at all. All good prose has depended upon what *vers libre* writers term "cadence," and has contained a perfect balance of flow and rhythm in the larger sense. Furthermore, the syllables have fallen so as to perpetuate the movement; and each individual episode, or division, has been conceived as a complete cycle of balanced movement. And all the greatest prose has fitted the action and cadence to the sense in the strictest onomatopœic sense, and has chosen, not the precise word for the image, but the word which would give the effect desired. The Imagists, perhaps the most influential and concise of the newer poetic schools, are emphasising the laws and needs of prose; and their advent is a salutary one. But since there is in their theory no point which is not embodied in all sensitive prose, it is confusing to call them poets unless we are to call all great prose writers poets. It is more logical and more in keeping with the development of æsthetic procedure to distinguish between the two arts, for their appeal is certainly different. The emotions produced by a metrical work and a *vers libre* work of equal merit are fundamentally different. They belong to two differentiated arts, and their appeal is dissimilar. A different set of physical laws governs

each. There is good and bad poetry, and there is good and bad prose; but to call good prose poetry, and to call bad poetry prose can result only in nomenclatural chaos. The functions of poetry are not those of prose. Prolonged metrical accentuation becomes, in a very short time, unpleasant; and a narrative poem, such as Masefield's *The Widow in the Bye Street*, is no more moving or beautiful than any one of its many individual images. Poetry is the metrical expression of an image: prose is the cadential, onomatopœic and balanced expression of document. The two have many qualities in common; but the vitality—even the *raison d'être*—of poetry (since it is an adolescent and feminine manifestation) depends on the science of metrics, or simple rhythm. It has an art parallel in the purely rhythmic music of the ancient Greeks. The present revolt against fixed metres marks a certain coming-of-age among our poets. They have passed beyond the primitive and physical appeals of poetry, and feel the need of something deeper and more intellectually moving.

## 111.

*VERS LIBRE*.—*Vers libre*, like all progressive innovations in art, is, superficially, a reaction against hackneyed forms, and, actually, the re-

sult of an impulse toward profounder effects and richer achievements. Like all new movements, it appears to many to be mere disorganised anarchy of the kind which lifts all restraint from the fixed forms of expression: hence its myriad imitative disciples. *Vers libre* appeals to many others because it seems to possess certain mysterious accents and uncommon rhythms, and therefore to present new metrical problems. To these latter, in contradistinction to the first group, it appears to be an even more complicated expression than the older poetry. *Vers libre*, however, is a very simple and obvious step in literary development, though one fraught with vast and far-reaching possibilities. At present it is, for the most part, merely a sign of instinctive revolution. But the revolution is dictated by profound, if unsensed, needs. The regular tempo-rhythm of measure has been done away with; and, in addition, rhyme has been cast out. As yet there has been no attempt to replace these qualities with anything save images and a certain tense realism. But, since all great poetry depends on the image, the abrogation of these other two qualities leaves us only the stripped skeleton of document. And, furthermore, since all good prose possesses the underlying rhythm which is claimed by the makers of *vers libre*, there is nothing at present in the "new poetry" to distinguish it, æsthetically,

from prose imagery. A similar revolution took place in music some years ago. By the abnormal accentuation of notes many composers attempted to do away with bar division. Here was the anarchy of musical rhythm. But these same men later came to realise that rhythm was as necessary in art as it was in life; and so they came back to it. In the matter of rhyme the newer poets have a different problem. *Rhyme is merely octave.* The rhyming of two words at the end of separate lines gives us a satisfaction analogous to striking the tonic note and reverting to its octave at regular intervals. The idea of rhyme as the sole harmony of musical composition has not existed since the Greeks before Pythagoras. Yet it has clung to poetry until the present day. When the harmonies of the third and fifth were substituted for the octave there was an excuse to drop the old form. But these younger poets give us nothing in the place of rhyme, or octave. Needless to say, they will inevitably be forced to come back to simple rhythm; and perhaps when that necessity is fully realised by them, there will have been discovered a scale of vowel sounds which will serve as a much-needed restraining hand on anarchistic exuberance. To-day *vers libre* expresses the tentative discontent with the older and simpler forms, and indicates the existence of a subconscious knowledge that a richer art is to

spring from the deeper comprehension of rhythmic and harmonious sounds and forms.

## 112.

**POETRY AND THOUGHT.**—Poetry's mission is to register imagery. The attempt of certain earnest persons to combine thought and prosody is like singing the multiplication table.

## 113.

**THE HUMAN VOICE.**—The use of the human voice in music is a relic of the early days when music was the handmaiden of poetry, when the document was chanted for purposes of enriching the mere effect of words. There were few musical instruments, and the purity of music as an art had not been sensed. Melody was only an auxiliary or accompaniment of poetry, just as colour was at one time only an auxiliary of drawing—a means of intensification, without an inherent function of its own. As the possibilities of musical sounds became more and more to be realised; as the science of harmony developed and came to be felt more intimately; and as the invention of musical instruments progressed and broadened—music gradually drew away from document; musical form took on an importance

of its own; and the art of music evolved as a separate and distinct æsthetic practice. But there was always a side of music which clung to literature, and that side now manifests itself in the opera. On the other hand, pure, or absolute, music (which is the highest form of that art, since it deals exclusively with æsthetic form unrelated to document or dramatic illustration) has reached its highest development in the modern orchestra and the symphony. Just as the greatest painting has become a pure expression of organised form and has discarded illustration and document, so has the greatest music become a pure organisation of sound-forms and has eliminated the human voice which, in that art, represents the illustrative and documentary content. The human voice still persists in music for the benefit of those unable to react æsthetically to pure form, just as illustration still plays a large part in much of to-day's painting, and as the mere story dominates much of our literature. When the time comes when we can appreciate and react to the highest art, the human voice will be discarded, just as will illustration in painting and the mere objective plot in literature. For the human voice cannot be used successfully as a mere instrument of music. It is imperfect, and its quality, as pure sound, has already been surpassed by many instruments. A 'cello is su-

perior to a tenor or baritone; a clarionette is superior to a contralto; and a flute is superior to a soprano. In fact, when we wish to praise highly the timbre of certain singers' voices, we compare them to these instruments; and their approximation to these instruments is the measure of their beauty. There have already been attempts to "orchestrate" the human voice, such as in Mahler's *Eighth Symphony*, Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, Brahms's *Deutsches Requiem*, and the operas of Wagner and especially of Richard Strauss. But these compromises with the prejudices of people who are impressed by the "human element" in music have been far from satisfying to the man capable of reacting to pure sound-form. Those who still find the greatest pleasure in the human voice and its documentary content are the æsthetic defectives: they correspond to that class which sees only exalted illustration in painting and which regards a work of literary art solely as a well-told story. The person whose reaction to art is wholly æsthetic regards the human voice as an inferior and inadequate musical instrument, for art, in its tensest expression, is to him a perfect amalgamation of all the parts into a perfect ensemble; and any intrusion of document (lyrical, dramatic or anecdotal) is irrelevant to its main purpose—that of unalloyed emotional ecstasy. Among the great-

est composers the human voice is becoming less and less significant; and in the purest musical compositions (such, for instance, as Bach's concertos and fugues, Mozart's *Jupiter Symphony*, Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, and Brahms's *Fourth Symphony*) it has no place. More and more as we come to understand the true æsthetic import of music, less and less will we tolerate the human voice *as a musical factor*. To-day it is enjoyed only by those who seek temporary recreation or who are incapable of the highest emotions of art. No one who truly comprehends the *C-Minor Symphony* can find æsthetic enjoyment in opera. For the man who has stood on the mountain-top, the valleys below will ever seem inferior and unsatisfactory.

## 114.

**LITERARY CHARACTERS.**—There are three classes of literary characters, although the general reader makes no distinction between them. To him, they are all “invented,” or “delineated,” or “created.” In fact, these three verbs are often arbitrary and indiscriminately confused and interchanged. But between them exists a mighty gulf: they represent entirely different calibres of literary talent as well as wholly differentiated methods. The characters of Dickens are “invented”; that is, they are plausible caricatures.

They have no exact prototypes in ordinary experience, although they are fraught with verisimilitude. They stand out because of their consistently portrayed idiosyncrasies; because of their unlikeness to common, everyday types. They are *sui generis*. “He looks as though he had stepped out of a Dickens novel”—in other words, he is an unusual person—a freak. This is the lowest form of literary characterisation, for such a character may be “invented” without documentary solidity; and without that solidity there can be no æsthetic form. Another literary type is the character that is “delineated”—the type, for instance, found in the works of Anthony Trollope. Trollope excelled in delineation; that is, he drew characters true to life, having before him always a definite person or type that he reproduced photographically. Consequently, his characters are lifelike: they *reflect* the solidity of life, as a mirror reflects it. The third and highest type of literary character is that which is “created.” Balzac was the great master of this method. His characters were neither invented nor delineated. He built them up, as nature builds them, first, by establishing all the causes, hereditary and environmental, which went into their making, and then by setting down the events through which they developed. Out of the conjunction of these subjective and objective forces grew the charac-

ters, moulded and fashioned by the life without and the blood within. As a result, they possess not a reflected solidity, but an inherent documentary solidity of their own. Only when such a profound process is adhered to by an author is a character "created." For the achievement of such a character the highest species of genius is necessary.

## 115.

**STYLE IN LITERATURE.**—The highest type of literary style implies the perfect ease with which a writer uses words. His method of articulation should vary with every thought or fact expressed, in accordance with the needs of documentary form. Perfect mobility and plasticity—the ability to change the manner of presentation at will—should be the desire of every writer. The painter changes his brushing to accord with the size of his canvas or the detail he is transcribing. (Compare Rubens's *Landscape with Château de Stein* and his *Ajax and Cassandra*.) The musical composer alters his technique to fit the type of his composition. (Compare the second movement of Beethoven's *Eighth Symphony* with the fourth movement of his *Fifth Symphony*.) But the writer strives to develop a certain technical manner, and he uses it, without variation, throughout his work. This technical manner is called

his “style,” whereas it is only a rigid and dogmatic repudiation of style. What is commonly termed “style” in literature is little more than an idiosyncrasy of expression—a mannerism. True style—one which attests to mastery—is an ability to change one’s manner at random so as to harmonise the expression with the thing expressed. A great stylist can write suavely, simply and delicately, as well as robustly, complexly and brutally. Shakespeare is a stylist. Pater is the negation of style.

## 116.

OPERA.—That music of an opera, whose merit makes one forget the opera, is good music. There is no such thing as good opera music. As soon as the composer begins to illustrate an action or an event he is treading on very superficial ground. He can create great music even while imitating words, actions, and the like; but the moment his music penetrates the listener’s consciousness *as imitation*, it ceases to be anything but opera music, and hence bad music. At that moment the documentary has dominated the æsthetic—which implies that the æsthetic was too weak and ineffectual to hold us. One cannot react æsthetically to art and enjoy nature simultaneously. The artist who, in drawing an arm, makes

of his drawing a magnificent bit of form, irrespective of its being an arm, is the great creative artist, for he has taken one thing, added to it his imagination, and created a second. But that artist who merely draws an arm accurately to look like a beautiful arm is an imitator and not a creator. In viewing both these drawings together we may admire the *arm* of the second and the *form* of the first; but it is mentally impossible to regard the first work both as a functioning arm and as a great piece of created form at the same time. So with music. It is either a pure æsthetic achievement; or it is a story or a mood or an event temporarily disguised in the integuments of music. Great music lives within and for itself—an organisation of abstract forms.

## 117.

**DRAWING.**—Drawing is, by its inherent nature, the art of depicting natural objects by means of a characteristic which does not exist in those objects (line), and by a substitution of black and white for their natural colours. The formal emotion we receive before a drawing is only indirectly æsthetic because preponderantly associative, for only through association can we grasp the formal significance. This associative necessity is due to the inability of lines to recede from or

advance toward the spectator's eye, and to the continual transposition of the black and grey patches between the hole and the bump. Since the invention of painting drawing has been mainly a preparatory step in the construction of a picture—an outline of muscles or shadow or light delimitations, which will familiarise the painter with his subject and thus facilitate him in the rearranging and ordering of his details and silhouettes. The only purely æsthetic element in drawing is the flat balance and poise of black and white masses; and these bear the same relation to the multifarious elements of a colour picture that the spacing of tempo by the drums bears to a full orchestra. Drawing is capable of producing in us a sense of balance and rhythm, both superficial and profound, but not a sense of subjective form. In fine, drawing can evoke no greater emotion than can a photograph of a good statue.

## 118.

**SCULPTURE.**—Since the death of Michelangelo there has been no progress made in sculpture, notwithstanding the fact that every year new men attain to prominence in this field. The explanation for this lies, first, in the emotional paucity of the medium of sculpture, and, secondly, in the fact that the world's greatest artist, Michelan-

gelo, by devoting his thought alone to perfecting this art, brought about a consummation more quickly than if its destiny had rested upon years of evolutionary development in the hands of minor men. Even with the Greeks sculpture had become highly organised and synthetic, and with Michelangelo the complicating and rhythmicising process had comparatively little way to go. The inherent limitations and insurmountable obstacles of sculpture render it far inferior to painting as an art. The goal of sculpture is to order the human body into a perfect æsthetic unit, and the human body in movement is just such a unit. Furthermore, its medium is fixed and insusceptible of intensification or alteration: in itself it is dead material. Whether a piece of plastic art be made of plaster, marble, granite, wax or clay, no functional problem attaches to it. One cannot plasticise the separate parts and modify their emotional effect, or in any way accentuate one unit of the medium above another, as is possible with both sound and colour. In this respect sculpture presents no greater problem than does a monochrome painting or a melody played upon a single reed or brass instrument. No research or experimentation has to be made in the matter of medium. On the æsthetic side of sculpture there are also definite limitations. For instance, it is not possible to create a great ensemble of, say, fifty

life-size figures as in a Rubens painting, because a canvas presents itself from one angle, whereas a piece of sculpture is visible from a hundred different angles and, as a consequence, would have to be a perfect order from every vantage-point. Such a gigantic undertaking would require an entire museum for its *milieu*; and, in the end, it would be of no more æsthetic importance than the painting; indeed, it would be of less importance, because of its lack of colour organisation. Even should the sculptor paint his statuary, it would appear as he intended it only at that one hour of the day when his colours were applied, for the shifting of chromatic values under different lights would distort the stationary and absolute forms. The reason that sculpture is almost entirely in the hands of unoriginal and mediocre men is because painting has usurped its field and has carried it into realms far beyond the sculptor's dreams. In painting is the apotheosis of sculpture. Even the inspirational element of sculpture is dead. Since Michelangelo men who still work in this medium are necessitated, in order to create, to dig among the ruins of antiquity for half-forgotten relics of primitive styles. Of late years sculptors have sought inspiration in South Sea Island, Phœnician, Aztec, Indian and Chinese figures, in the carvings on North American totem poles, and in primitive Negro sculpture.

But painters have gone ever ahead, sounding new depths, and pushing their art to profounder conclusions. When we consider a Rodin (whose best works are plagiarisms from the Greeks and Italians of the Renaissance), Rude (whose talents moulded archaic Greek simplifications into military illustrations), Carpeaux (whose undisciplined inspiration was now Gothic, now post-Renaissance), Meunier (an exponent of the *integral* naturalism of Donatello), Maillol (who goes to the archaic Greeks and Egyptians), and Archipenko (who uses the surfaces of Michelangelo with the spirit of Cubism and “Fauvism”), we realise at once how sterile are sculpture’s potentialities. A few men, like the late Gaudier-Brzeska, have attempted to make sculpture abstract; but in abstract art there must be a delicate and moving interdependence of parts which is only possible in a *shifting, relative* and *non-absolute* medium such as colour and sound.

## 119.

WHY ART WHOSE EFFECT IS ABSTRACT MUST BE COLOURED.—There are numerous proofs attesting to the inability of sculptural and black-and-white graphic art to produce an abstract emotional effect. (In black-and-white art are included those paintings in which the attenuated

colours have no formal or emotional significance greater than that of a decoration composed of tonal values.) The reasons for this failure lie in a tone's inability to approximate to stable qualitative form and its resultant immobility and absoluteness when related to other tones, and also in the inability of mere lines to produce a sensation of recession or advancement. Abstract art—that is, art which, by emphasising pure oppositions of form, nullifies its objectivity—must, in order to be subtly moving, hang on a slender and delicate thread of cohesion; and, in its very nature, it cannot express subjective states by means of obvious and unforgettable solid matter, as does sculpture. There must always be that human element of logical fitness between medium and expression. Colour is a highly subtle, plastic and relatively fluctuating medium, moulding and moulded by its environmental colours, changing and directing line, capable of portraying relative objectivity and of producing complete subjectivity. Tone alone possesses none of these attributes. It has no defined character of quality, and, being negative in its functioning, is easily frozen into static shapes and unalterable extensions. This freezing process makes it appear, when drawn up into an ordered drawing, like a copy or a photograph of a prettily, even artistically, arranged pile of lumber before which the

spectator experiences a sense of unavoidable impenetrability. Colour, like thought and sound, has its natural and inevitable sequences; and certain combinations of these sequences are able to set in motion that associative process which makes the complete realisation of an art work a natural, human and emotional pleasure. Aside from the subjective limitations of tone in a picture aiming at abstract effect, there is also a lack of purely emotional ecstasy which the presence of colour produces. Colour, in fact, constitutes a full third of art's attraction and power, irrespective of subject-matter.

## 120.

THE MEANING OF SIMPLICITY IN ART.—To-day, because of the progress art has made in advance of both critics and public, we hear and read much concerning the simplicity of great art. We are told that the great minds are the simple minds, that art should come within the comprehension of all. And yet these very disciples of simplicity indulge in eulogies of Michelangelo and Gothic architecture! The works of the great Florentine and of the builders of the Rheims and Rouen cathedrals are anything but simple manifestations. Indeed, they are complexity itself. How is it, then, that these lovers of the simple

pretend to penetrate and enjoy such art works? The answer is that they have confused cause and effect. No great art has been born into the world since before the Renaissance which is simple art. Even the really simple art of the ancient world is far more complex than the layman is capable of understanding at a glance. There is in all art, however, a certain simplicity of vision. A great work of art presents itself as a whole. It appears to the spectator as a unique ensemble, as a unit. Thus, in the same way that the human body or any natural object may be simple, so is there simplicity in art. It is a seeming, not an actual, simplicity. The reason a person speaks of the simplicity in a Michelangelo statue or in a Gothic structure is because the æsthetic expression presents itself *en masse* as a familiar object. The subtle placements and displacements of the statue resolve themselves into the familiar objects of a human body. The infinite and fantastic ornaments of the Gothic conception resolve themselves into the familiar object of a building. But there is no such thing as great simple art. There exists only an art whose order is simple in its ultimate effect. If the preachers of simplicity could see into the fabrication of that art, could understand its infinite ramifications, they would realise that their creed is a false one. The fact that modern art does not

always appear unified is not due to its greater complexity, but to the modern artist's inability completely to visualise his work. The art of the peasants and the Negro sculptors is the only truly simple art. It is the expression of a simple-minded people and cannot, aside from its novelty, interest for long the lovers of profound beauty.

### 121.

THE DANCE.—Dancing, undoubtedly the oldest and most primitive method of human emotional expression, was the forerunner of all the rhythmic arts. That the dance itself is not a great art and is, in its nature, incapable of becoming great, is not due to any decrease of its power for physical exuberance, but rather to its direct humanity —its dependence on wholly emotional states. The dominance of its inherent physical element throws it aesthetically out of balance, for art is the poised expression of willing, knowing and feeling. Down the ages the dance has come to us in hundreds of different forms, yet it is easily divisible into three classes: (1) the dance in which nature's elements and human and animal occupations are imitated; (2) the pantomimic and mimetic dances, which include the choral dancing of the Greeks and the individual and more musically interpretative dances of our own time; and (3) the spectacular

ballets and acrobatic dances, which include the ceremonial, religious and arbitrarily arranged dances of primitive tribes and of peoples in a rudimentary state of civilisation. In many cases these classes overlap each other, combining two sets of characteristics; and a certain amount of spontaneity is often introduced into even the most formal dance arrangements; but it is nevertheless possible to classify them in this manner, as each dance represents a definite intention or an impulse toward a type. (Such dances, so-called, as those of the Fellah boys, Almehs and Nautch-ees are not included, being mere feats of endurance and inspirations to sensuality.) The first class embodies such as the Wave Meke, Snake, Astronomic, Pyrrhic, Gymnopædic, Hayato-Mai and Xiphic dances. The second class is made up of the legendary and dramatic dances of the Greeks, the Morris Dance, the No, the Bellicrepa Saltatio, the Sun Dance, and those purely emotional "interpretations" of music, sometimes called classic because the costumes and attitudes are based on Greek and Roman art—the dances of Isadora Duncan and Maud Allan, for instance. The third class comprises hundreds of rhythmic movements executed by large groups—the dances which, among uncivilised peoples, precede or accompany certain ceremonials: the Animal dances of the Black Feet, the Maori Funeral dance, the

Pæan, Palilia, Bergerette, Kollo, Jota, Wake, Danse Macabre, Makovitzka, Czardas, Tarantella, Heh-Miao, Kagura, Bon-Odori, the modern French Ballet, and the gymnastics of the Russian Ballet. In all these modes of dancing the intention is dramatic, histrionic, rhythmic, or utilitarian. Some are used to create bellicose courage; others to produce a contemplative or ecstatic mood in keeping with funerals and religious rites; still others, like the modern classic and dramatic dances, attempt to produce a feeling of physical exhilaration in the spectator, or to interpret, "spontaneously and freely," the mood or spirit or subject of a piece of music. But in no instance is there a profound concern with æsthetics. Since music's sole basis is a precise edifice of form which presents itself as a simultaneous image, its *mood* is secondary and, to a great extent, inconsequent. Therefore, to interpret merely this mood is to ignore music's cardinal significance. Furthermore, the ultimate worth of a work of art lies in its simultaneity of effect; and the mood, which seldom remains the same throughout a composition, is impossible of visualisation as one organic block-manifestation. Likewise the dance (no matter what its actual intention, whether formal or vaguely emotional) is insusceptible of this visualisation, for, even were its movements capable of extended development toward a formal cli-

max, through tonic phrases and motif repetitions as in music, painting and literature, the spectator would be unable to feel the recurrent rhythms on account of their being spaced (as to time) too far apart to form a metrical sequence. Each movement of the dance which results in a physical displacement and a return to bodily balance is a complete rhythmic cycle; and, were longer or larger rhythms attempted, the strain of the body would be felt by the beholder as well as by the dancer, and the sense of fluidity and smoothness would be lost. Consequently, in witnessing the dance, the greatest emotion experienced is that projection of perfect ease and freedom which, in its intensity, is always basically dramatic. The highest forms of dancing are only capable of superficial rhythm—rhythm which is really movement, not action. The underlying æsthetic rhythm, which welds every detail into a formal whole and gives an art work life, is necessarily absent. Therefore the philosophical significance, without which there is no great art, is lost entirely. What remains is a lyrical drama, a poetic and charmingly cadenced pantomime, a succession of elegant and emotional postures. The interest in the modern revival of dancing is purely sensual and primitively rhythmic. The frantic prancings and the gaudy colour schemes of the Russians amount to no more than a pantomime

on a background of pageantry, and are interesting only as a recreation. But though dancing can never take its place in the realms of great art, it has a very definite and important destiny. In all educational systems, such as Delsarte's, it possesses a high utility as a personal expression of emotional enthusiasm: it is a game and an exercise for the development of physical grace and more harmonious bodily proportions.

## 122.

SYNTHESIS IN ART.—Too great an importance is attached to the synthesis of a work of art. Such an attitude is inevitable, however, so long as art is regarded wholly from a standpoint of representation. Synthesis is to representative art what order is to empathic art. In painting, synthesis means that each pictorial part of a picture is relative to all the other parts. There is a consistency or logic in all the colours, shapes, lines, and tones. These elements are combined in such a way as to give the impression of a simple vision, of a perfect objective ensemble. No one item in the picture—volume, atmosphere, light, action, colour, texture or proportion—obtrudes or even asserts itself as the thing it is. Together they create a single new element in the form of an interior, a landscape, a figure piece or a still-life.

In literature, synthesis is the perfect amalgamation of thought, subject-matter, description, character and incident into a complete, uniform narrative idea. Synthesis in music is the combining of a certain tempo, a certain pitch, a certain harmony and a certain sound volume in such a manner that a single sustained mood results—mood in music being the representative element which corresponds to the pictorial idea in painting and the narrative idea in literature. In short, synthesis in art means that the separated elements of a work are compounded in such exact proportions as to constitute a whole. But this synthesis, while necessary to all art, is not synonymous with greatness. The fundamental compositional order is of far greater importance. Here the representative relationships are moulded into a complication of æsthetic ordonnance. The recognised vision is extended into a three-dimensioned *emotional* depth. The shapes, episodes or notes are given a formal significance and are carried into apposition, development and finality. The work of art then ceases to be merely representative and becomes the medium of abstract forces.

## 123.

PURITY AND NEUTRALITY IN THE ARTS.—Just as a pure orange, when of middle tonality, will

advance nearer the eye than when mixed, though still pure in character and vibration, with the nearest tonality of neutral grey, so will middle C, when played on an instrument whose inherent purity lies alone in this central scale, approach nearer to the ear (provided the volume is equal in both cases) than when played on an instrument whose tonal purity lies in another (a higher or lower) key. (Middle C, when sounded on this latter instrument, will seem to have had something added or subtracted which neutralises the clarity.) Literature, whose mechanical medium is words, can strike a purer note when the writer makes a proper choice of certain cadences and onomatopoeic words, as, for example, when quick and febrile action is expressed by harsh Anglo-Saxon derivatives, or when a sentimental scene is recorded with long, flowing and soft words of Latin origin.

## 124.

*FORTE AND PIANO IN THE ARTS.*—One of the very important structural devices in art is the intensification and the diminution of volumes, whether of sound, episode, or colour; namely, the device of *forte* and *piano*. In a piece of music the composer explicitly denotes when the volume of sound shall be intensified or diminished so that

it will completely balance, by its power or weakness of utterance, another part of the composition. The result of such *forte* and *piano* is the extending and diminishing (respectively) of the subjective proportions of the affected parts. *Forte* and *piano* in painting are represented by the actual extent of the visual forms—if large and dominating, the effect is *forte*; if small and only slightly in evidence, the effect is *piano*. In literature *forte* is obtained by the dictional insistence and emphasis of verbal visualisation. Thus are accentuated the salient sequences on which the fluent and balanced thread of the work depends. *Piano* in literature results from casual references and suggestions, and is used when episodes, persons or ideas are unimportant. Any work of art in which the *forte* and the *piano* are reversed is thrown out of proportion: the augmentation of those parts which were intended to be small, and the shrinking of the necessarily large parts, destroy the homogeneity of the conception. The effect of interchanging these qualities in music would be analogous to that of a picture in which the perspective was exactly reversed: the result would be incongruous and ludicrous. In literature the same effect could be obtained by enlarging and emphasising the minor details and condensing the important episodes into brief statements.

## 125.

**LINEAR EFFECTS.**—Lines in art have significance according to their character. Artists—and especially painters—have felt the effect of lines, but few have determined the results of linear fluctuability. Straight lines produce calm, not only when they are placed horizontally (as is generally believed), but in any position whatever. So little does the straight line vary in significance, that its direction is negligible from an emotional standpoint. It represents the static, the lifeless, the rigid. The emotional element of a line is determined by its degree of curve. On curved lines depend all movement and, hence, all great compositional form. The straight line in æsthetic organisations is only a foil to the curved line which represents the plastic, the alive, and the mobile.

## 126.

**REPOSE IN ART.**—The word “repose,” as it is commonly used in reference to art works, connotes no more than an illusion of repose. In painting it refers to the even use of greys and the static and motionless perpendicularity of compositional forms. In literature it means merely that the subject-matter is obvious and is recorded in a leisurely and rhythmically uniform

manner. In music it indicates simple harmonic sequences, an absence of unexpected transitions, and a constant reverting to the tonic. In short, whether in painting, literature or music, it is more or less synonymous with placidity, immobility, and monotony. Real repose in art, however—that is, repose in the æsthetic sense—is something much more recondite than uniformity or monotony. It is created by a complete harmonious organisation, not by an avoidance of movement and contrast. When a work of art is so rhythmically co-ordinated that it presents an absolute finality of movement and balance and thus engenders an emotional, as well as an oracular and ocular, restfulness and relaxation, then, and only then, it possesses true artistic repose.

## 127.

**MOVEMENT, AND THE HOLLOW AND THE BUMP.**—“Movement” in a work of art is obtained by alternating the hollow and the bump; and the rapidity of the process of placement and displacement determines the rapidity of the movement. The acceleration of this process is analogous to a man who first walks and then increases his speed to running. In walking he puts forward a leg whose advancement creates a bump, and whose displacement results in a hol-

low. Over the advanced leg is the hollow caused by the displacement of the shoulder; and the shoulder itself constitutes the bump which hangs over the hollow of the displaced leg. Thus there are two hollows and two bumps which are continually alternating; and the rapidity of their alternations is the measure of the man's speed. Were he to run very fast the eye would be unable to follow the swift successions of his placements and displacements: the *sensation* of movement in the spectator would be supplanted by a mere recognition of progress: the man's figure (save for its relation to a background) would appear static. The bumps and hollows in music are the accents and the spaces; in literature, the episodes and pauses; and in painting, the formal convexities and concavities. And when the alternations of these bumps and hollows, in any of the arts, become very rapid, the effect is analogous to a swiftly-moving figure. Thus when musical notes (from which results the tempo) follow each other too quickly for the ear to distinguish them as rhythmic repetitions (as in a trill or a tremolo), the surplus of speed results in exceeding slowness: many notes strike the consciousness as one prolonged note. Literature, in which the action is too swift to be fluent and sequential, becomes repetitive and monotonous, and ceases to possess dramatic movement. If, in a painting,

the forms, or lines, or colours, or tones are too minute, in relation to the canvas as a whole, for the eye to adjust itself to their formal atmosphere, the effect is one of static chaos. But if, in the course of these examples of frenzied movement, wider divisions of phrase, of action, or of form should appear, there springs into existence a new and larger, but slower, rhythm, each division of which is composed of very small parts. It is as if a man running with great speed should, at regular intervals, slow down or stop, and again rush forward. The mass of small movements made in each advance then becomes to the spectator one movement; and this mass is complemented by a further series of movements which result in still another large movement. Here we have an analogy of that multiplicity in simplicity which characterises all great art.

## 128.

THE UNIQUE PRESENTATION OF EVERY ELEMENT IN A WORK OF ART.—The writer and the musician have been fortunate in possessing a ready-made and rationalised medium. The musician serves himself with a standard scale whose divisions and harmonic arrangements have been thoroughly investigated and recorded. The writer uses phonetic symbols and a system of

syntax which are necessarily common property. But the painter must pass through a long period of experimentation and research before he even arrives at the point of expression. His medium—colour—is little understood, and its precise functionings can be determined only after years of analysis and testing. So little does the world know of colour that the painter who uses it as the sole material of his work is regarded as a theorist who has turned his back upon life. It is only during the past century that artists have cast off the bonds of traditional ignorance and attempted to purify their art; and it is only within the last few years that they have regarded the natural medium of colour as the first consideration in æsthetic expression, just as sound and document (expressed by words) are the first considerations of music and literature. Formerly the painter drew his picture first, then made a chiaroscuro, next worked out the composition, and in the end applied a layer of ornamental colours. The picture, while charming and attractive, possessed no significance as a piece of *colour art*. This is why the works of the old masters lose little of their inherent power in black-and-white reproductions. Beethoven, on the other hand, used sound to express every quality of his works; and it is this oneness of vision—this amalgamation of every possible element into a single im-

pulse—that gives the close-knit perfection to his music. Volume, form, rhythm, order, and poise all grow out of the single medium, sound. Not until painters in general learn the lesson that colour in itself can express all their æsthetic inspirations, will painting take its place beside the purer art of music. In any art we must receive our impression uniquely, not piecemeal: the æsthetic emotion must be simultaneously presented. And this is possible only when the artist conceives and executes his vision *d'un coup*.

## 129.

**APPROPRIATE MEANS.**—Since the foundation of all art is compositional form, the only means which can be accepted as vital are those which increase the artist's power in the expression of rhythmic ensembles.

## 130.

**SYNTHESIS OF THE ARTS.**—The numerous attempts which have been made to synthesise the arts have been the outgrowth of a vague realisation that the æsthetic fundamentals of all the arts are identical. Their failure has not been due to any inherent impossibility of unifying different stimuli so as to produce an intensity of reaction, but to the fact that the arts as yet are

not understood with sufficient precision by any one man. Not until a definite *rationale* has been established, embodying every phase, complexity and variation of the different arts, will such a synthesis succeed.



### III

## ART AND THE ARTIST



### 131.

**EVOLUTION IN THE INDIVIDUAL.**—The entire past progress of an art is condensed and expressed in each of its great exponents.

### 132.

**TALENT AND GENIUS.**—Talent is the ability to express effectively the mere material of human experience. Genius is the ability to divine and to give expression to the forces which underlie and co-ordinate this material. Thus genius is essentially a philosophic process which finds expression through talent. Every great work of art is a statement of the plastic unity of existence.

### 133.

**LIFE AND THE ARTIST.**—There can be no great ascetic artist. The richness, variety and contrast which are necessary to the nature of the artist who achieves great organisations of form, must have resulted through much contact with the many phases of life. Even the life of the mind is wholly dependent on objective nature for both its

most obvious and its most remote ideas. There is, of course, a quality of mind which is inherently rich; but the material thought must needs be gleaned from life. All other things being equal, the artist who has had the more febrile life of body and brain will create the greater art. By life is not meant merely physical adventures—the superficial experiences of indulgence. The life indispensable to the artist is that which calls upon him for the exercise of his powers, which teaches him the necessity of intellectual combat, and which therefore develops his consciousness and teaches him the laws of poise, balance and plasticity.

## 134.

**THE PART AND THE WHOLE.**—Hand in hand with an artist's vision of the whole must go an infinite capacity for fitting together the most meticulous details. A great work of art is great in any one of its parts, for in every detail is embodied the whole.

## 135.

**PARVENUS.**—Discipleship in the young artist is as necessary as his later emancipation. No one can commence building an art where his most advanced predecessor left off. He must travel the

same road as that taken by his predecessor if he is ever to outdistance him. Happily, all artists start from the same goal, namely, æsthetic ignorance. And they can never learn by another's mistakes. They must make those mistakes themselves before the experience can become *assimilated* and the lesson *felt*. A disciple's progress is, of course, faster than his forerunner's. The latter's trail is open to all; his methods are clarified. To pass beyond him when the extent of his achievement has been reached is the great problem of the innovator. The new man not only must overcome prejudice, contumely and conservative ignorance, but he must construct a highway as he goes. The brave man who follows this long and difficult route has only scorn for those artists who leap from rudimentary academism to the last phase of art's progress. These latter men are *parvenus*, lovers of shallow effects. They succeed only in imitating the surface aspects of the masters.

## 136.

**CREATION AND ANALYSIS ARE ONE.**—Let us no longer separate the analytic mind from the creative. The highest type of analytic mind resides in him most able to create. An artist can progress in his work only to so high a point as he can understand.

## 137.

**CHILDREN OF THEIR EPOCHS.**—The painter or sculptor who, endeavouring to belittle modern efforts in art, asserts that he is a child of Egypt, Assyria or Greece, reveals at once his complete ignorance of the art of those countries. In order to produce work such as the ancients produced one must of necessity possess the same type of temperament and mentality which the ancients possessed. Such a mental parallel is obviously impossible between two totally different ages, for attitude and temperament are governed by the organisms of environment. A painter or sculptor who lays claim to these temperamental affinities is unable to grasp the foundations of modernity. And since those foundations were laid in the ancient and mediæval worlds, the “modern primitive” can probe no deeper than the superficial aspects of those early works with which he claims relationship. At best he can give birth only to a bastard and weakened art. He who is not of his own age belongs to none.

## 138.

**FREEDOM AND LAW.**—We hear much of the cramping restrictions being put on artists by the dictates of æsthetics; and simultaneously demands are made for the absolute freedom of the creator

as the only means for full and significant expression. But there can be no freedom without law and order. Anarchy is but a spurious form of freedom, which restricts the liberties of the individual. Order is the basis and meaning of life. Only because of stringent laws is it possible to indulge in volitional action with safety. If vehicles, for instance, were not legally restricted as to their course, the simple process of stepping forth into the street would require a constant attention which would limit not only our freedom of thought but our freedom of action. The same law applies to art. An artist without æsthetic laws would find himself handicapped by the insuperable confusion of chaos. He would be enslaved by the disorder of freedom.

## 139.

**THE RHETORICAL ESCAPE.**—The artist who talks of the spirit and of the spiritualisations in his work is ignorant of the body. He is merely throwing metaphysical sand in the eyes of criticism.

## 140.

**SENSITIVITY AND TECHNIQUE.**—The science of æsthetics does not concern itself with petty rules governing methods of expression—that is, with

the grammar of art. It has to do wholly with the underlying structure as related to human organisms. Sensitivity in art (given even a rudimentary knowledge of technique) will always triumph over mere technical skill, for sensitivity implies an intimate fellowship with æsthetic form. Schubert, who wrote passages so bad from the standpoint of the text-books that a conservatory pupil would be ashamed of them, was a master melodist. What is more naïvely beautiful than the second subject of the first movement of the *Unfinished Symphony*, or the slow movements in the two Trios, *Opi 99* and *100*? Schumann, on the other hand, an inferior artist, was the perfect specimen of the composer of talent, highly educated and musically correct in all he wrote. Matisse's drawings, as sensitive and naïf as a Schubert melody, are greater than the most polished work of the merely proficient academicians. But bear this in mind: a lack of technical skill is not a virtue, but an actual handicap. The greatest artists—the Bachs and the Rubenses—combined a colossal technique with a highly developed æsthetic sensitivity. A sensitivity is of no value unless one possesses the capacity to transmit it through some medium; and, other things being equal, the artist with the greatest technical facility will be able to set down his vision with the purest intensity.

## 141.

**RICHARD WAGNER.**—It is commonly said that Wagner was the greatest operatic composer. Rather, let us say, he was the greatest composer who wrote opera. Puccini is an operatic composer: he fits his form to the libretto. Wagner's best music—that in *Die Meistersinger*, for instance—possesses a form of its own, unrelated to the dramatic story. His greatness lies in the fact that his music is, in the strict sense, anti-operatic. He was more intent on developing motifs than on developing a dramatic story.

## 142.

**SPORADIC REACTIONS IN COMPOSERS.**—It has been said that there comes a time in every composer's life when he turns to illustration for inspiration. Of late years the reaction to programme music and opera is dictated by the same impulses, in terms of a cycle of endeavour, that each separate composer at times feels as an individual. In both cases it marks the return of the pioneer to the soft happiness of mediocrity: it is the temporary fatigue of intellectual endeavour with the accompanying desire for stability and comfort—the momentary reaction from the mental to the sentimental.

CYCLES OF AESTHETIC DEVELOPMENT.—All individuals who create consummately are first dominated by the emotional. From that they pass into an abstract and cerebral period of analysis and pure composition. Later, the pendulum swinging back, the two become one, and the highest art results. (Beethoven's highest individual creation began with the *Third Symphony*. After his two Mozartian experiments he wrote the *Eroica*. This is an almost wholly emotional work, which accounts for its popularity among the untutored. Then followed the *Fourth Symphony*, a pure piece of intellectual writing, which has had no special vogue. These two impulses were combined in the *Fifth*, the greatest of the Beethoven Symphonies. The *Pastoral* was an illustrative interlude, marking the close of the cycle. Then the emotional impulse reappeared in the *Seventh*. Again this was followed by the pure intellectualism of the *Eighth*. And the second cycle ended with the *Ninth*, Beethoven's second greatest symphony, in which were combined the two preceding impulses. Regard also the keys in which these symphonies were cast. The two emotional symphonies—the *Third* and the *Seventh*—are in E $\flat$  and A respectively, both sentimental keys. The purely intellectual symphonies—the *Fourth*

and the *Eighth*—are in B $\flat$  and F respectively, two of the harshest and “noisiest” keys. The *Fifth* and the *Ninth Symphonies*—the two greatest of Beethoven’s compositions—are both in minor, the first C, and the second D. Their actual tonality is magistral and embodies both the emotionalism and the purity of the other two sets of keys.) Nations and movements follow exactly this evolution. Those that remain adolescent are emotional; those whose capacity to visualise is atrophied are analytic and abstract; the others undergo all influences equally and produce great and comprehensive art. The cycle renews itself eternally: when a consummation has been reached there is again the reaction to emotionalism. The length and power of the periods of productivity depend upon national and individual temperament, and upon susceptibility or insusceptibility to reaction.

#### 144.

**UNITY OF DICTION AND THOUGHT.**—The manner of expression, in order to be effective, must reflect the thought or thing expressed. A heavy pedantic style does not fit a light subject, nor does dictional buffoonery fit serious ideas. The element of association enters into all expression. Words and phrases are the symbols of document, and must carry in their atmosphere the character

of the substance. A funeral march may be so rendered as to make it ludicrous; and the man whose style is superficial gives the impression of superficial thinking. The powerful writer is the one who matches his thought and diction.

## 145.

THE SEEMING DISAGREEMENT OF ARTISTS.— “How can there be such a thing as an artistic truth,” the public asks, “when nearly all great artists differ among themselves in art theory? Which art school is right; which, wrong? We can only choose that which appeals personally to us; that, for us, is great art. Obviously there can be no standard with all the exponents of art at constant disagreement.” Persons who reason in this manner are handicapped by a superficial vision, and are consequently led to false conclusions. No two great artists differ *radically* concerning art. The fundamental basis of art form is recognised and understood. Michelangelo, Rubens, Renoir, Cézanne: Goethe, Balzac, Flaubert, Conrad: Haydn, Beethoven, Brahms, Richard Strauss:—the æsthetic foundation of all these men is identical. They can—and must—be judged by the same basic standard. They aspire to the same exalted goal; they assume the same æsthetic premise. They differ only as to method.

They are in disagreement only as to means. The manner of presentation in art passes through many a diverse and evolutionary stage. But the *thing presented* does not vary. It is unalterable and eternal. The body of art remains unchanged. Only the clothes in the wardrobe of art give rise to discussion among the great creators. Renoir is a great painter for precisely the same reason that Rubens is a great painter.

### 146.

**INVENTION AS THE FIRST STEP TOWARD IMAGINATION.**—Invention is the organisation of memory: it is dead because it possesses no inherent vitality. Imagination translates invention onto the plane of living things, for it infuses invention with the vitalising source of all thought—the philosophic outlook.

### 147.

**INVENTION AND IMAGINATION.**—Invention determines certain forms, and then forces the artist's material into those forms. It is like a foundry mould into which is poured the melted ore. The result is predetermined and foreseen. Invention is also like a machine constructed for some utilitarian purpose; and its beauty lies only in

its adaptability to the desired end. An inventive painter, like Tintoretto, draws several lines and builds his picture on these lines. The large masses follow the lines, but the small masses, which are as important to the unity of the work as are the large ones, have no ultimate destiny. Tintoretto's art gives forth the impression of having been fabricated. It is to great art what an animated automaton is to life. Though perfect as a piece of mechanism, it still lacks vitality. Imagination is creation by evolutionary sequences. From an idea, which is the chemistry of art, forms *grow*; and from out these forms others spring, dependent and interdependent. These latter forms are the direct and logical result of what has come before; and when they are combined with the first set of forms, they give birth to still further developments. The æsthetic value of these *imaginative* forms is dependent upon the accuracy of the artist's sensitivity to that which is inevitable in shape or sound or action.

## 148.

NECESSITY OF A *PARTI PRIS* IN THE ARTS.—A *parti pris* is the intensification of temperamental preferences which result in the dissimilar aspects of all great artists' works. Physically all artists see and hear and understand nature and

objectivity alike. Were they all merely to imitate life, the difference between their work would be only the measure of their graphic ability to record the same vision. But a *parti pris* goes deeper than the eyesight: it has to do with the very calibre of intelligence. It expresses not only an artist's aspirations, but his limitations as well. It is his philosophic viewpoint made concrete: without it the artist is only a recorder. Those who cry out, without study or investigation, against the strange aspect of a certain artist's work, believing it to be merely a charlatan's mask for tricking the general, reveal at once their shallow outlook. Often that which appears strange to-day is the milestone of a new impulse to-morrow. A genuine *parti pris* is not a mask or an eccentricity. It is the visage of a new soul.

#### 149.

**Ego.**—It is only when the love for and confidence in oneself dominate the reverence for others that the artist is free to create.

#### 150.

**NEED OF THE PAST.**—The past is a very necessary foundation on which to build the structure of contemporary art; but, for those who have what might be called artistic self-respect, past

achievements can be only a starting-point. In order to add to a structure which ever rises higher the architect must thoroughly know the base. It is a lack of comprehension of art's forerunners that results, on the one hand, in the spurious anarchy, and, on the other hand, in the infantile timidity, of the so-called artists of to-day. The anarachs, looking only as far as the superficial aspects of their antecedents, call for an *auto-da-fé* of all the art which has preceded them. The timid ones, having no initiative or penetration themselves, merely accept the conventional dictum that the æsthetic foundation of the past is correct; and, since they are beyond art's immediate surroundings, they raise their voices in praise of reactionary impulses. Both are wrong because neither has any profound understanding. The former should realise that it is impossible to produce in one generation a world of entirely new beings—that changes are the result of a slow building-up process. The latter would do well to cease their attacks on the more advanced ones long enough to consider where art would now be if man had always been content with the heritage of the past.

## 151.

PROGRESS.—Any artist who thoroughly comprehends the latest step in the evolution of his

art can add something to that evolution. No man has receptive enough a brain to encompass genius without having genius himself. If we can understandingly traverse all the road of our forerunners, we have proved our power. Furthermore we have gained strength, and can go forward. Contrary to accepted opinion, it takes creative ability to understand creation. Is not active thinking the building of an edifice?

## 152.

**CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS IMITATION.**—Conscious imitation in the arts, which is generally regarded as charlatanism, has resulted in the great man pushing forward the boundaries of human knowledge. On the other hand, unconscious imitation, which as a rule is condoned, is the inevitable etiquette of stagnation. Those who imitate consciously are actively weighing the achievement of the centuries in the scales of analytic intelligence for the purpose of making a temperamental choice of method. Such artists are alive to their own individual needs. The unconscious imitator merely sees the world through the eyes of another, the reverence for whom has dominated free expression. Every man of genius has at some early period played the plagiarist to more than one master. The weaker man, never

having realised his forerunners, is without knowledge of their profound problems. He skims over the surface of art like a boat on the sea, forever unaware of the untold depths, pregnant with forces, which lie beneath him.

## 153.

INSINCERITY AND IMITATION.—The minute variations of mental characteristics in even two very similar persons are proof enough that imitation is insincere expression. The majority of artists whom the world considers great are no more than charlatans who have seized upon the knowledge of others, distorted it or turned it into obscure channels, and laid claim to it as an original discovery.

## 154.

THE *IMPRÉVU* IN ART.—Many mistake the “unforeseen” in art for greatness. But this *imprévu* is a result of the greatness in the great—not a goal toward which they work. The quality in itself is a nugatory one, and, as a rule, is the label of those artists who wish primarily to attract attention. These *arrivistes* take many roads to notoriety. They count almost wholly upon a bizarre of effect (spurious radicalism) to create a vogue. The true *radicals* of the day, however,

have for every step a reason which is deep-rooted in the experiences of æsthetic emotion. Their desire is to construct a permanent art—to unearth the laws which govern our enjoyment of beauty. The false radicals desire only to dazzle us for the moment. It is such men who cry out against any precise analysis of art. When a critic approaches the shrine of their hypocrisy, they cry “Systematiser” and “Theorist.” The genuine artist invites analysis. There are hardy roots at the base of his *imprévu*.

## 155.

“*LÈSE-MYSTÈRE*.” —It is the second-rate artist who always rebels against exact æsthetic knowledge. The great artist welcomes it and even attempts to explain the processes of art reaction. Says Anatole France: “The science of æsthetics has no firm basis,” and he attempts to explain art on mysterious grounds. Debussy’s resentment of precise knowledge is stated thus: “Men in general forget that as children they were forbidden to dismember their puppets, but they still persist in poking their æsthetic noses where they are not wanted. If nowadays they have ceased to split open their playthings or toys, they still explain, dissect, and with cool indifference put an end to ‘all mystery.’” And Rodin declares in his book,

*L'Art*, that mystery is the atmosphere that bathes the greatest art. Similarly, other artists of their calibre make impassioned pleas for ignorance. On the other hand, truly great men, like Balzac, Goethe, Haydn, Beethoven, Da Vinci and Cézanne, have expressed their belief in exact æsthetic knowledge, and have endeavoured to contribute to it. The artist who is hostile to investigation attests to his own artistic insecurity. He is suspicious of his own power. He lacks self-confidence, and sees his safest course in giving impetus to the conspiracy of silence and unquestioning acceptance. So he invents a new crime—“*lèse-mystère*.”

### 156.

POSSIBILITY OF CATALOGUING ART IMPULSES.—From incantations, charms, witchcraft potions and pilgrimages to sacred springs, to the precision of modern medication and surgery is a far cry, and there are few who would revert to the former methods for the treatment of disease. All this progress has resulted from research, experimentation and observation, related and co-ordinated until something like a scientific *rationale* has been established. And the science of æsthetics is also advanced beyond the old ideas of inspiration and “divine” eclecticism. But whenever an attempt is made to introduce scientific analysis in-

to art, the cry of blasphemy is raised. However, despite this opposition of ignorance, there is a movement on foot to-day to find the *why* and the *how* of æsthetic activities; and already the movement has made so much headway that prejudice and contumely and cries of sacrilege cannot cast an obstacle in the way sufficiently large to impede its advance. Artists are openly developing a conscientiousness. They are striving for precision, and are delving ever deeper into the heretofore hidden fountain-head of causes in order to make their art more truly profound and philosophic and to give it a more universal emotional significance.

## 157.

THEOPNEUSTY.—The day of the belief in the “divine” inspiration (the impulsive performance) of the poet, the musician and the painter is happily passing. The marginal rewritings of Balzac, the infinite pains of Michelangelo, the workers in Rubens’s school of masterpieces, the notebooks of Beethoven, the years taken by Cézanne to finish a work, the months of patient study and the constant alterations on the pictures of Matisse—all belie the sentimental assumption that a divine hand guides the pen and brush to glory. The birth of a work of art is the result of a long, patient and painful evolution. It is the trans-

mutation of thought (in conjunction with emotion) into a precise and concrete form.

## 158.

**APPRECIATION.**—The artist who pretends to be utterly indifferent to all criticism underestimates, rather than overestimates, himself. While it is true that only a creator can *understand* great creation, nevertheless a great piece of art will make itself felt very often where no understanding of it exists. The majesty of a supreme art work will have an effect without being appreciated: its power will engulf people despite themselves. This is why critics often praise art works for totally inapposite reasons. They are striving to express something they have felt but have not comprehended. Therefore an artist should not sneer at what appears to be ignorant commendation. But let him make sure the praise is spontaneous, and not merely the mouthing of shallow-mindedness.

## 159.

**MODUS OPERANDI.**—In all art the end justifies the means. Conscientiousness, sincerity, sacrifice, lengthy endeavour, idealistic tenacity—these things are of no value without consummation. A magnificent result, no matter how hastily, care-

lessly or falsely achieved, is the sole test of greatness. Only failures, and the weak who instinctively sympathise with failures, make an artistic virtue of laborious intentions.

## 160.

**DECADENCE.**—When a work of art appears to have been shunted from the conventional, familiar track because of some seeming aberration in the artist's mind, which has given him a distorted vision, then it is that we hear the accusation of decadence. But very often the unfamiliar aspect of an art work is indicative of the reverse of decadence. Decadence is the inability to create new life; but the word, as it is commonly applied to art, is so distorted that it has no exact meaning. When used as a descriptive adjective for literature it generally connotes "erotic." A composer is "decadent" when he attempts harmonic sequences not approved by the text-books. In painting, "decadent" indicates obscurity of intention or novel and incomprehensible effects. Thus Swinburne, Strauss and Matisse are "decadent," if we accept the dictum of the critics. The word has been hurled at all innovators; but, in the great majority of cases, it attests to its user's inability to understand the art he is thus stigmatising. No experimenter in new fields is decadent.

The true decadents are the accepted and respected academicians who unsuccessfully imitate the work that has preceded them. They create nothing new: they stand for retrogression.

## 161.

**AN ANALOGY FOR IMITATORS.**—No one believes that a photograph of a clock will tell time. Yet there are those who assert that imitation of nature is the life of art!

## 162.

**THE COMPLETE EXPERIENCE.**—Art is the outcome of man's contact with life and of his ability to determine the cause beneath the effect. Great art is the expression of the man who, by the scope of his experiences, is both a monster and a god. The monstrous part of life is quite as important to knowledge as is the divine.

## 163.

**INSPIRATION.**—Inspiration is the moment of realisation. For instance, we know a fact about art; we speak of it; we recognise it in pictures. Yet that fact remains something apart from us, something which has not been incorporated in our

being, something superimposed upon our consciousness. Then, without warning (we may be thinking perhaps of other things), suddenly a certain thought will come to our minds, and, with it, a great realisation of the fact. The knowledge will blind us mentally for a moment with its colossal reality, with the impressiveness of its truth. In that moment we have ceased merely to know the fact: we have come to experience it. It has become a part of our being. At that moment we are inspired. At that moment we may cry, "Eureka!"

#### 164.

**THE REVOLT AGAINST CULTURE.**—There are certain modern artists who, realising the futility of merely following the accepted academic standards, seek to give art a rebirth by reverting to archaic beginnings. Such artists deny all value to sophistication and knowledge, believing that intellectualisation tends to lead one away from profound emotions. They place spontaneity above analysis, and naïveté above culture: thus they attempt to repudiate the development of thought in æsthetics. Their ideal is the simplicity of the child; and therefore, either consciously or unconsciously, they apotheosise the primitive artlessness of the early epochs in creative expression. Stravinsky and other of the modern Rus-

sian composers (together with a few ineffectual imitators of other nations) are substituting time signatures for harmonic and thematic scoring in an endeavour to strip music of the formal attainments of centuries and to make it once more a wholly rhythmic art. Painters, also, like Zak and Rousseau, are purging their canvases of order and sequence, and substituting a primitive imagery of the most static kind. As a result, a spurious revolution is noticeable in certain quarters; and this revolution is hailed by a band of unthinking radicals as a salutary and progressive manifestation. But progress in art cannot be accomplished by ignoring the evolution of knowledge. Reverting to the naïf is only begging a complex question. Form in all the arts has followed the growth of human consciousness and needs; and the truly great and progressive artist is the one who, after he has absorbed and mastered all the learning which has preceded him, can create new forms in line with that evolution. The composer of the future must be colossal enough to *surpass Beethoven*: a repudiation of him leads only to decadence. And the painter of the future must be sufficiently great to *transcend Rubens*. Art, like life, is a pushing forward, with the whole of the past as a stepping-stone. The top of the mountain will never be reached by him who deliberately seeks the lowest valleys and is content.

## 165.

**ART COMMUNITIES.**—Great artists are never the products of the community spirit. In all cities there exist “quarters” in which the shallow iconoclasts, the failures and the imitators congregate for the purpose of exchanging their ineffectual ideas and of consoling one another for their poverty of mind. Such places are the breeding grounds of incompetency and of “schools” of art. The great creative artist could not exist in such a *milieu*. His nature is necessarily solitary: his gregariousness is only on the surface. He has an instinctive antipathy to the puny souls who need companionship and support.

## 166.

**HIDING BEHIND THE VEIL OF SANCTITY.**—Only the second-rate artist with a fuddled vision and a vacillating purpose resents a scientific discussion of his methods and aims. He fears discovery.

## 167.

**TARDY APPRECIATION OF GREATNESS.**—The great artist is rarely appreciated at once, for his work is the result of years of study and experimenting; and, in order to understand it, one must

have followed the same tortuous and vicissitudinous road.

## 168.

**ORDER AS DISTINGUISHED FROM GRAPHIC ABILITY.**—The creative, as distinguished from the transcriptive, artists of the past placed models before themselves, not for purposes of inspiration, but as formal restraints on their expression. The posed human body was merely the material shape through which the *order of the artist's mind* became visible. This is why correct ("right") drawing has nothing to do with artistic ability. The ignorance of this fact impels many painters and draughtsmen to continue their trade instead of changing to a more congenial one. These latter men select a model which appeals to them physically, and then strive to portray it. Their work results in a more or less sensitive reaction to what is before their eyes. They are only human mirrors who have the ability of setting down their reflections on canvas.

## 169.

**TAINÉ'S DEBT TO BALZAC.**—Undoubtedly Taine, the profoundest of all critics, received the inspiration for his outlook in the *Philosophie de l'Art* from what he saw in Balzac's method of cre-

ating characters. His entire critical philosophy is stated in *Splendeurs et Misères des Courtisanes*. It comes just after the description of La Torpille. “*Les êtres humains prennent-ils quelque chose aux milieux dans lesquels ils se développent, et gardent-ils pendant des siècles les qualités qu’ils en tirent? Cette grande solution du problème des races est peut-être dans la question elle-même. Les instincts sont des faits vivants dont la cause gît dans une nécessité subie. Les variétés animales sont le résultat de l’exercice de ses instincts.*” Incidentally here is proof that Balzac was a conscious and analytic craftsman.

## 170.

**POETRY.**—The ability to write great poetry is an excellent preparation for the writing of great prose. Indeed, fundamentally they should be synonymous.

## 171.

**TRADITION.**—Unless we define our use of the word “tradition” we will always be at cross-purposes in our discussions of art. Already there has grown up two schools—the traditionalists and the anti-traditionalists. Conceivably both are right: in fact, many critics belong to both schools without knowing it. Tradition may mean two

things according to one's capacity or incapacity for deep thinking. If by tradition we connote the fundamental and fixed laws governing art—that is to say, the basal need for form, composition, poise, and the like, then all art which is genuine (not excluding the most modern and audacious works of the younger men) must adhere to tradition: it must follow the principles to be found in the older art. But if by tradition is meant the mannerisms of art—the *aspect* which is the result of a certain age, then each new step in æsthetic evolution has deliberately gone against tradition. Haydn, and not Beethoven, is the greater symphonist. Cimabue, and not Rubens, is the greater painter. All the *genuine* modern painters, composers and writers are, in the profounder definition of the word, traditional. They abide by the inherent classicism of art.

## 172.

ON BURNING ONE'S BRIDGES.—In art, as in life, if one aspires to innovation, to new and undiscovered heights, the safety of old foundations and the security of old charts must be forgone. Steps must be taken in the dark. Those who cling with one hand to the old while groping toward the new can never reach their desires. High courage, immunity to isolation, fearlessness in the face of the

unknown, a belief in one's power to find new stepping-stones, a readiness for self-sacrifice—only with these traits can one push forward the bounds of human knowledge.

## 173.

## THE NECESSITY OF EXACT KNOWLEDGE IN ALL

## CREATIVE EXPRESSION.—The greatest drawback

in the development of art is the antipathy against full and precise knowledge, which results in an ignorance of basic principles. Precise knowledge ~~of~~ X

of one's own art is necessary for even the most rudimentary creative expression. To write literature one must learn the symbols of words and must know their exact connotation before they can be recorded in such a manner as to convey an idea. Furthermore one must have studied grammatical construction and have observed life and character ere a story becomes homogeneous and intelligible. The musical composer must know scales, keys, tempos, harmony and the system of scoring; otherwise he will not be able to set down his composition. In painting it is far easier to produce even an inconsequential portrait if one has exact knowledge of the formation of the skull; and, in any event, the painter must be able to mix colours properly and to harmonise values. No matter how fluently, and apparently unconsciously

an artist may work, a certain amount of precise knowledge must have been acquired through painful study and sure experience. But the reason for an artist's failure to attain to greatness lies in the fact that when he reaches this preliminary and, in reality, preparatory point, he ceases to study and decries all deeper knowledge, warning the world to beware of the "over-intellectualisation of art." However, there are some men who delve into the hidden recesses of psychology, analyse the formal compositions of past masters, invent new scales and new accords of sound, attack the literary problem in a new manner, determine the scientific reasons for æsthetic reaction, discover new orders for form and colour—thus pushing forward the existing boundaries of art. And their activities do not result in æsthetic disintegration. To the contrary, their efforts lead to the establishing of new and higher laws which, in turn, lead to a purer and profounder art. No man who has not understood *à fond* the principles of his predecessors has ever taken a forward step in artistic procedure. Strauss understands the orchestra of his antecedents as perhaps no other man of to-day, and his knowledge of "classical" music is profound: Conrad studied and assimilated the methods and achievements of Flaubert; and Cézanne deeply comprehended the Renaissance painting and Impressionism. But Debussy, with

his aversion for analytic precision, is a musician of mere trivial novelty: Zola, spontaneous and impressionable, lacks even the slightest æsthetic significance: and Bouguereau, though more talented than Cézanne, holds only an inferior place in the world of painting. Without deep and precise knowledge no artist can attain to true greatness.

## 174.

**EXPERIMENTAL SCHOOLS.**—Looking back at the experimental schools in art—those schools whose energies were devoted to solving the minor problems of realism—we are apt to regard them, in the light of profounder and more creative schools, as manifestations of utter futility. Who now cares for those meticulous methods by which the minutiae of naturalism can be expressed? Yet it is by just such self-burials in data that the æsthetic possibilities of nature's actualities are exhausted. And not until this probing to the bottom has been accomplished does the artist possess that complete knowledge which impels him to push forward to something newer and more vital.

## 175.

**PERSONALITY IN ART.**—It is only during periods of thin and bodiless art that the criterion of

“personality” takes an important place in æsthetic appreciation. During the Renaissance it was rarely applied, but to-day it is perhaps more common than any other standard of judgment. Although the world in late years has produced significant art, high creative ability appears to be the property of only a very few men who have detached themselves entirely from their followers. The imitators of Cézanne and Matisse, for instance, resemble their leaders only in a most superficial manner: they seem unable to grasp the deep-lying principles of Cézanne’s and Matisse’s work, and to desire only to reproduce their original and novel appearances. The important difference between one work of art and another lies in just that profound outlook which imitators as a rule overlook; and for one who senses art deeply, tricks of technique, mannerisms, strange colours, or habits of drawing cannot obscure the real impetus which drives a highly creative artist to his task. In order to analyse this “personality” in art let us assume that five men of divergent temperaments seat themselves before the same model for the purpose of giving birth to what they consider the true expression of that model. One, by a few broad strokes, will record the salient characteristics of its outline, thereby expressing the character of a silhouette. Another will conceive it as a congeries of planes, and will

reproduce it by straight lines and flat surfaces. Still another will paint it in a freely impressionistic manner, caring only for the exaggerations and harmonisings of colours. The fourth will reduce it to a few essentials, and make it appear like an Assyrian bas-relief. The fifth will study its forms and co-ordinate them into a complete rhythmic composition. Each one of these men will discover something valuable in the model; and yet the first four are children as compared with the fifth. To all five the model appears exactly the same, just as it would look to any one. The first painter is clever enough to grasp a certain ensemble of outline quickly; but, after all, his picture does not give us a linear character which we are unable to see in the model itself. Even should it do this, of what worth is it as art? It would be valuable to us only as a very fragmentary record of an inconsequential fact. The second, by changing the model's rotundities into angularities, merely infuses it with a greater volumnear emotion. In this process all colour and movement are lost: the painter has only succeeded in intensifying our feeling in the model's actual solidity. The third accomplishes merely a feat in realism: he paints at the top of his voice where the academician would paint in a whisper. The fourth, reverting to a simplified vision which is out of place in modern life, reconstructs a primitive relic and

makes it flat. Each painter, in his own way, strives to catch what is called the model-ness of the model, to express the very essence of what is before him, blinded to the futility of reproducing an object's details which are obvious to any sensitive observer. The fifth man, however, cares only for an æsthetic composition. When he has finished—although his work may not possess the salients, planes, colours, angles, or flatness of the model—he has created a genuine work of art. But the great majority of art lovers and critics, not understanding his work because of its exclusive concern with formal principles, will praise the "personality" of the first four and insist that this "personality" reveals the true artist. This viewpoint is mainly a sentimental one. Of what importance is an artist's character or peculiar angle of vision if he is incapable of creating profoundly? Personality, as such, in art is negligible. There is only one test of genius, and that is that an artist be able to *create* a picture (not merely reconstruct a natural object) which will possess an intense life over and above its pictorial qualities. Not until all painters, like those few leaders whose personality is secondary, give their entire time to æsthetic principles and ignore the novelties and idiosyncrasies of aspect, will this epoch take a place beside the important epochs of the past.

## 176.

**THE SIGNIFICATION OF STATIC AND PLASTIC COMPOSITIONAL DESIGNS.**—Angularity or immobility of design is found in the works of all primitive-minded peoples, and is notably conspicuous in the early Egyptians, the archaic Greeks, and the Assyrians of the eighth century B. C. It is invariably the product of the static intelligence into which the comprehension of æsthetic movement has never entered. Those artists who express themselves through it are men whose minds are incapable of grasping the rhythmic attributes of profound composition. On the other hand, mobility of design is indicative of artists who have attained to a high degree of conscious intelligence. It represents a mind into which a plastic philosophic conception of life has entered. Flowing movement was first introduced into art by the Greeks; and this movement has steadily been complicated and ordered by the highest creative intelligence. It is found in all great works, and its empathic intensity gives us the measure of their greatness. It is the element into which the individual projects the rhythms of the body. Movement constitutes the very consciousness of existence, and, through it, art interprets for us the forces of life according to the profundity of the artist.

**P**ERFECT BALANCE OF EVERY IMPULSE NECESSARY TO THE ARTIST.—The day of the belief in the insanity of genius has passed. The pseudo-science of Nordau has been refuted by profounder psychologists; and as the true character of the creator becomes more and more understood, the world will gradually come to realise that genius can be gauged by its approximation to a perfectly poised sanity—that art, in fact, can result only from a mind surely and delicately balanced. The æsthetic and philosophic principles underlying a great work of formal art can be grasped and assimilated only by a man who is capable of plastic thinking, that is, of conceiving analogies and differences simultaneously. His thoughts, when coming in contact with the physical world, take on a philosophic significance; and the art to which they give birth either interprets the concrete world abstractly (as in literature and music), or expresses the abstract world concretely (as in sculpture and painting). In both cases the result is an ordered formal conception. In all true genius there is an almost complete equilibrium, psychological, ethical, philosophic, actional and emotional—an harmonious polarity whose cycles of thought never lose poise. Indeed, it is impos-

sible for a man who is excessive intellectually, emotionally, or physically, to retain that swaying perpendicularity of impulse which represents the mean of human fluctuability, and which alone results in great and lasting creative achievement. Nations are subject to the same laws as are individuals; and the art of a nation is the only perfect expression of its character, ideals and history. Germany, whose temperament is impersonal and whose education is abstract, has never produced a great visual art; and Italy, whose outlook is personal and whose temperament is preponderantly physical, has never given a profound philosophical system to the world. Only when the physical and the abstract, the personal and the impersonal, come together in perfect conjunction in an individual or a nation, can there issue forth a work of genius. A Leonardo da Vinci is too mental; a Corot, too emotional. A Michelangelo combines the two extremes. Intellectual analysis in such an artist becomes an unconscious and wholly assimilated process; and, in addition, he is able to *feel* the underlying meaning of all images.

## 178.

**GREATNESS AND REPUTATIONS.**—One reason why a reputation for greatness is often withheld from a man during his life is because so much

of a pioneer's energy is spent in combating hostile criticism and indifference that his fund of creative force is depleted. His work, being necessarily incomplete, does not give itself to the spectator with force and insistence; and the spectator, who is unable to look beneath its incompleteness, fails to recognise the new truths. The credit for greatness first falls on those men who, availing themselves of the solutions of problems accomplished by past reactionaries, create finished works. But later, when the world has accepted the new principles, the pioneer is crowned with the bay leaves of posthumous fame.

## 179.

THE NEED FOR ACADEMIC TRAINING.—Of late years we have heard much of the pernicious influence of scholastic training for artists. The academies, we are told, cramp genius and force expression into set moulds: only untrammelled inspiration can produce work which is free from conventional restraint. Thus is ignorance turned into a virtue, and laziness given the badge of greatness. To deny the value of academic instruction is to controvert history, for in all great art epochs art training was at its height. Mere inspiration has never produced a significant work of art. No untrained man, however highly gifted,

has as yet been able to execute his vision adequately. The history of great men in painting, literature and music attests to the necessity of a profound objective education. Schooling has never dwarfed genius: if a man succumbs to academic training it indicates an incompetency which, under no circumstances, could have resulted in high æsthetic achievement. By teaching restraint, order, precision and the control of impulses the school fits a great man for exalted expression: it makes possible his self-fulfilment while weeding out the mediocre. The true artist needs, above all else, self-control. All his faculties must be under strict obedience. Only slavish minds are suppressed by discipline. The purely instinctive and inspirational genius is a myth.

## 180.

**THE SUPERIORITY OF EXTENDED VISIONS.**—The extension of an artist's compositional vision, other qualities being equal, determines his greatness. A musical composer, for instance, who writes a symphony in which each minute part is an intimate factor of the whole, and in which the four movements are correlated in the larger rhythmic sense, is greater than the one who writes a rondo whose entirety is no greater than one of the symphony's movements.

## 181.

**THE INEXPRESSIBLE IN ART.**—In Goethe's comment that the finest achievement for men of thought is to have fathomed the fathomable and quietly to revere the unfathomable, lies a salutary doctrine for those artists who strive, by means of mysticism and associative symbols, to express the inexpressible. Failing in precise æsthetic expression, these artists attempt the creation of an art which will embody, or at least suggest, transcendental qualities expressive of their moods or momentary emotional reactions. Their desire is to transmit to the spectator the vague personal impressions which have seized them during the contemplation of some natural phenomenon. Not only are these obscure inner impressions insusceptible of concrete articulation, but they are wholly personal and individual and consequently untranslatable into a common language. They are ever unfathomable save, perhaps, through the means of associative psychology and psycho-analysis. However, were it possible to transmit them to others by arrangements of lines, colours or sounds, they would be outside the range of æsthetic achievement unless conveyed through formal organisations; and, conveyed thus, they would lose their associative appeal. The great artist is the one who devotes his efforts to de-

veloping his medium, to fathoming causes, and to discovering principles. He does not concern himself with emotional mysteries which inhabit the extreme borderland of remote psychological experience.

## 182.

CREATIVE STRUGGLE AND ACHIEVEMENT.—For one who appreciates art the enjoyment centres wholly in the finished and perfected result. But, to the artist, the result, as such, is almost entirely negligible. His chief pleasure lies in the process of achievement—the struggle accompanying the organising of forms, the creation of a perfect equilibrium, the co-ordination of all the various factors. Throughout the work, which is one of calm, cool and directive, but nevertheless intense, enthusiasm, he is conscious of the joy of absolute power over the parturition of a new and wonderful cosmos. Each line, colour, note or word is like an individual character whose life and death are in the artist's hands, and whose vicissitudes, restraints and freedom are of the artist's will. In all great and profound æsthetic creation the artist is an omnipotent god who moulds and fashions the destiny of a new world, and leads it to an inevitable completion where it can stand alone, self-moving, independent, and with a consistency free of all exterior help or in-



fluence. In the fabrication of this cosmos the creator finds his exaltation, for he lives and experiences each separate direction and volume and rhythm. And while he always feels a sense of pride and exhilaration as he applies the final touches, he also suffers disappointment and sadness at the thought that his work is done forever and no longer needs his hand.

## 183.

**PHILOSOPHER AND ARTIST.**—The purely philosophic and the purely feminine processes of thought are diametrically opposed. The philosopher deals with abstractions, whereas feminine thought is the direct result of physical experience. Between these two intellectual antitheses stands the artist: he co-ordinates the physical world into abstractions of form.

## 184.

**EXECUTANTS.**—Those musicians whose lives are devoted to rendering on various instruments the compositions of others, are, in reality, no different from those skilful painters whose business it is to make copies of other men's pictures. The particular "interpretation" of musical works, which would seem to constitute the superiority of

one performer over another, is, after all, only a personal, and therefore a minor, consideration. The form and substance of the music is not altered: there is added no æsthetic quality which would warrant the performer in laying claim to any creative ability. At most he has contributed a seasoning of personality; but to the profound art-lover the personality of the composer, expressed by types and complexities of form, is the only emotional concern. There is no creative power, in the highest sense, necessary to an executant. The greatest musical works require many performers, each one of whom is but a part of the machine which the artist has conceived. Professional performers are little more than imitators living on the reputations of the great. When the admirable violinist Schuppanzigh complained of the difficulty in one of Beethoven's works, the composer answered (in the third person): "Does he believe that I think of a wretched fiddle when the spirit speaks to me?"

## 185.

**THE NECESSITY OF KNOWLEDGE BECOMING INSTINCTIVE.**—Isolated knowledge, in its informational sense, is of little value to the creator. It is of worth only to a certain type of theoretical educator. Knowledge, in order to be of service

to the artist, must be acquired from personal experience and wholly assimilated by repeated applications and experiments. In other words, it must become part of his emotional equipment, and must form the background of his every word, thought and impulse. This assimilated knowledge is to æsthetic expression what the muscular system is to the human body: it governs the form and beauty, controls the directions, and supervises the movements. Were more artists and critics capable of learning the principles of æsthetic form and organisation and of incorporating this knowledge into their very natures, there would be less adverse criticism directed toward æsthetic precision. But the majority can assimilate knowledge only up to an abecedary point. Beyond that, if they progress at all, they remain conscious and detached theorists. A careful study of the reasons why time has consecrated certain works of art and why other works, differing from them, have been forgotten, would go far toward increasing the artist's instinctive knowledge. By this method the student would find what quality great works have in common, and, by applying this criterion to all works, he would reach a basis of comprehensive knowledge. As a general rule, such knowledge is gathered second-hand; and when an artist has not, through personal travail, assimilated his learning, his

work is forced and superficial: it is like an automaton whose life is that of a mechanical instrument. Plasticity and spontaneity in profound creative effort result only from that knowledge which has been experienced personally and infiltrated into the very fibres of consciousness.

## 186.

MERITS AND DEMERITS OF ECLECTICISM.— Every artist who eventually achieves greatness passes at some time in his early development through a period of sedulous eclecticism; and his future is determined by his thoroughness during this hazardous period and by the intelligent manner in which he incorporates into his own art the solutions of problems relative to himself. In the serious and genuine artist this impulse toward imitation grows out of a need for self-revelation: he increases his power, and at last discovers his individual destiny. The absence of all desire to measure one's budding strength against the strong men who have come before is indicative of the self-satisfied ignorance of the æsthetically incompetent. "Schools" of art are made up of men whose limited understandings have halted them on the hither side of high attainment. Even in the case of inferior men the imitative impulse is beneficial, for it directs their

efforts toward profound problems which soon engulf them, thus leaving the field clear for the few. On the other hand, eclecticism has its baleful influences. It often serves as an excuse for analogies on the part of influential critics and, as a result, attracts the public eye from an artist's true significance. It sometimes leads to a wide-spread mediocrity, as in the case of the Carracci. It not seldom establishes a false standard of values by obscuring the real aims of an art movement. And it tends to give false ideas of completeness to art students who are retarded in their development by trying to find the line of a Veronese around the colour of a Cézanne, or the greys of the Japanese on the compositions of a Rubens.

## 187.

**THE REQUISITE BALANCE OF THE ARTIST.**—The artist is a man in whom the will to create and the ability to feel are perfectly poised.

## 188.

**THE REVIVAL OF COMPOSITION.**—After the colossal strides made by the Renaissance masters a reaction set in. Painters became apathetic in face of nature; and their inability to create new forms swept away all æsthetic and philosophic

knowledge of composition in both painting and sculpture. Graphic art became mainly a series of dramatic events depicted with no thought of related parts or underlying rhythm: it was entirely pictorial. Not until the advent of Delacroix was there a conscious effort at its rehabilitation; and his canvases were, for the most part, based on some simple formal plan of past masters. But the art world was passing through a great upheaval of realism: it was becoming emancipated from traditional tenets; and it was not until the influence of Cézanne was felt that the idea of composition again took hold of the artist's mind. To this man of Italian antecedents is attributable the modern impetus toward the profounder problems of art. He it was who sensed the all-encompassing importance of composition. By studying ancient masterpieces and expressing his rediscoveries by the new methods, he became the bridge which joined the nineteenth century with the Renaissance. Always there had existed in painting a surface balance of parts; but it was Cézanne who ushered in a new cycle of subjective rhythmic order.

## 189.

**ARTIST AND PUBLIC.**—Artists whose works possess a new and unfamiliar aspect often complain

of the public's indifference and its inability to recognise their talents. But in so doing they both underestimate themselves and overestimate the public. Such men should realise that, since their lives are devoted to one line of endeavour, they progress æsthetically much more rapidly than the public which has only leisure moments in which to enjoy art. Should the public, with its limited time for art, advance in its ideas as rapidly as the artist, with his full time, it would attest to the artist's inferiority. Certain creators even insist that the public should purchase art works on the authority of others. But is it not the natural instinct of man to invest in those pleasures which are immediate and understandable? The artist does not invest in things he neither desires nor cares for; why should he demand that others support him merely because of his serious purpose? The world has never been interested in serious intentions as such. It desires pleasurable and comprehensible amusements; and these the sincere artist cannot supply. Isolation and neglect are the price which innovators must pay for the ecstasy of high achievement.

190.

THE "RADICAL'S" PLACE IN ART.—Radicalism in art is generally the accompaniment of the man

who has profound feelings, a great enthusiasm, a high ambition, and a meagre ability. He feels the need for progress, for rebellion against a vitiating academism, for a cessation of decadent imitation; but his intense and feverish energies are, for the most part, wasted on the discovery of a new and isolated problem. Usually he appears in the first stage of a new renaissance of definitely directed art effort. He creates dissatisfaction with the old, but himself accomplishes little that is new. His place in art is like that of the wrecker who tears down an old edifice, but who is incapable of rebuilding. Like all extremists, he wants a definite yea or nay, forgetting, in his enthusiasm, that the foundations of art are deeply human and that only through the travail of time can vital changes come about. He overlooks all logic, and pushes simple syllogisms to fantastic conclusions. By the world at large the radical is regarded either as a prophet or a madman. But, in reality, he is neither: he represents merely the seeker who finds the cobwebs of tradition and age. Those genuine artists who accomplish significant changes build on tradition, ascending the heights as one would climb a ladder. There is another type of radical, but this one is even less significant than the first. He is the unobserving imitator, hailing all new achievement, and following blindly the steps of truly

great innovators. Thus are men of genius always preceded and followed by retainers, one group announcing his entry, the other crying his praises.

## 191.

**THE INDIVIDUALITY OF ARTISTS.**—The individualities, or personalities, of artists are of small moment. A painter's, or writer's, or musician's temperament can dictate but two phases of variation: it can select the material he is to use in his composition, and it can supply superficial qualities such as joy or sorrow, comedy or tragedy. All true æsthetic considerations—form, balance, rhythm, poise—spring from profounder depths in a man's nature than those which contain his temperamental predilections. Despite the many divergencies of common tastes, mankind is, after all, so similar in his mechanistic reactions that one artist's deviations from another are unimportant. The true test of an artist's genius is not his strength or fascination of personality, but his ability to organise. The greater he is as an organiser—no matter what his individual predispositions—the more exalted he is as an artist. The compositional figure on which he builds will alone give us the substance of his character. This figure is a direct expression of his basic nature, and reveals, as no other evidence, the depth of

his philosophical viewpoint. By it we may often determine, beyond question, disputed authorship. Personal likes and dislikes for subjects, actions, moods, smells and the like are but outgrowths of instincts—habits of psychic association. They are in the main psycho-physiological, never fundamental; and their importance is limited to the individual experiencing them. Being largely the result of receptivity, they have nothing, basically, to do with æsthetic expression, which is pure creation.

## 192.

**THE SOURCE OF INDIVIDUALITY.**—The apotheosising of individuality in creative expression began at that time when all artists were called upon to depict the same exalted, vague and imaginary legend or character or story. When the work was completed those members of society whose knowledge and taste gave them a place of critical importance, would pass on the merits of the numerous pictures exhibited, and would award the honours to that artist who had approached nearest to the layman's criterion of the supposed truth or beauty or power of the subject. As a result, the inventiveness which the honoured artist alone possessed, and which was his own personal and individual attribute, became the quality of greatness, and transcended

technical ability and balance, although these latter qualities may have been superior in the works of others. So-called individuality, therefore, rests on a utilitarian, not an æsthetic, basis. We find it at its zenith in periods following great florescences, when the original inspiration is moribund, and in those chaotic and experimental times when no great genius arises to direct all æsthetic efforts into one channel.

## 193.

MODERNISM.—Modernism in art is often considered the result of subject-matter. A painter depicting dreadnoughts or a poet singing of skyscrapers is regarded as modern. But this is not modernism in art: it is modernism only of theme. The modern artist is one who makes use of the latest refinements and researches in his medium, and who builds on all the technical discoveries which have preceded him. Methods, and not content, determine the modernism of an artist.

## 194.

APOTHEOSISING TECHNIQUE.—During modern times technical dexterity has done much to obscure the real value of art. The most mediocre of men can, by patience and practice, attain to

a high degree of craftsmanship. The great artist is often too absorbed in the deeper problems of æsthetics to acquire the perfected ability of second-rate men to whom cleverness is the chief concern. Unfortunately this carefully cultivated brilliance of execution arouses the admiration of the semi-educated spectator; and the highly efficient craftsman is raised at once to the rank of greatness. Fame has thus been accorded to the slightly artistic performer whose superficial dexterity has succeeded in astonishing the on-looker. Velazquez, Raphael and Manet have, therefore, usurped the places which, by true æsthetic standards, belong to Goya, Giorgione and Cézanne.

### 195.

**MEDIOCRITY AND GREATNESS.**—The distance between mediocrity and greatness in art is very slight. The mediocre man may approach closely to the colour, poise and order of the great man—so closely, in fact, that to the casual spectator or auditor he seems to have arrived at his goal; but he never bridges that lacuna which separates a precise art from one which is *à peu près*. And it is this last delicate refinement of perfect harmony which the true genius possesses and which his imitators do not completely attain to, that places him in the exalted rank of greatness.

196.

CHARACTERISTICS OF NOVELTY.—In many phases of modern art—painting, music and literature—can be detected the attitude of the ardent visionary who, when contemplating an æsthetic novelty, desires to carry it to even greater extremes. In such an attitude youthful enthusiasm plays a large part: it is indicative of that unorganised emotionalism which precedes the calm and masterly self-control so imperative to genuine creation. In no instance has it led to significant results. The superficial characteristics of great artists are, as a rule, no more startling than those of lesser men.

197.

THE DANCE IN GRAPHIC AND PLASTIC ART.—Superficial artists, from earliest antiquity to the present day, have been interested in action and brilliance. Such men love life more than art, and their created works have been largely an attempt to record impressions. It is natural, therefore, that the dance, with its colour, grace, and flowing movement, should have attracted them. In the pictures and statues of all second-rate artists we find objective portrayals of dancing figures. These artists, failing to understand the principles of æsthetic movement, record only that ac-

tional segment of the dance which epitomises a cycle of movement; and, as a result, their pictures are little more than ornaments or arabesques. But with great artists the dance, if used at all, becomes arbitrary—an ornament of an ensemble. Michelangelo found no inspiration in it; and in Greece it was the potters, not the great sculptors, who depicted it. The Hokusais of Japan ignored it, whereas the smaller men seized upon it eagerly. Always it is the feminine talents who select it as a representative subject. The reason lies in the fact that the dance possesses largely an illustrative and decorative appeal: it furnishes a basis for pattern, not for profound organisation.

### 198.

**THE SEER.**—The seer in art is the man whose accurate perspective (resulting from profound and impersonal knowledge) permits him a universal vision of art's multiple impulses, and whose ability enables him to direct these impulses toward a unified achievement.

### 199.

**THE PLASTIC MIND.**—The plastic mind is the mind which, instead of approaching a problem from the nearest side, throws itself automatically

to the opposite side, and, by thus obtaining a double approach, arrives at a fuller comprehension. This mental plasticity is an attribute of the feminine side of the artist. In women it is called intuition, and having no positive and constructive will to guide it, it is of no intellectual surety.

IV

ART AND THE INDIVIDUAL



**THE OPPONENTS OF KNOWLEDGE.**—In art matters the ignorant fear, above all things, precision. They instinctively resent explanation. They thrive only in a *milieu* of inexactitude. They demand that their own bad taste, prejudice and sentimental preference be left inviolate against the intrusion of exact knowledge. By constantly discouraging all investigation and experimentation they hope to maintain an artistic standard based on their ignorant eclecticism. Hence their apotheosis of taste—*their* taste; and their antagonism toward the science of æsthetics. The more resourceful and educated opponents of art knowledge point to the fact that Wagner was proved a violator of artistic canons, that Beethoven broke contrapuntal laws, and that Schoenberg's harmonics are irregular. Are these things, they ask, not enough to make one sceptical of æsthetic discussion and to prove the futility of æsthetic theorising? The question, however, is a *non sequitur*. The science of æsthetics is here confused, either through ignorance or with intent, with minor rules of harmony and counterpoint. Furthermore, the science of æsthetics is

not a theory founded on an uncertain hypothesis. It is a method of determining the relationship between accepted facts, and is founded on recognisable and, in the majority of cases, simple phenomena. The popular assumption that art and its reactions are a mystical and esoteric process insusceptible of scientific analysis and unrelated to psychology and physiology is no more than a relic of cabalistic superstition.

## 201.

## PERCEPTION A CO-ORDINATION OF SENSATIONS.

—The process of perceiving a work of art consists in relating the various sensations produced by its many individual factors. Such a process requires an active participation of the mind. In the simpler and more obvious forms of art it can be accomplished by those of primitive mentality, as in pictures where the objects are easily recognisable and have no subtle tone qualities, or in literature where the document is wholly objective and the action mainly physical, or in music wherein the homophonic style of writing is adhered to. But, in the more complex types of art, preparation and study are necessary for complete perception. That is why the purer works of art are beyond the reach of the many. Unable to generate a process of perception, they

react only to the various sensational elements of an art work. The effect of the work upon them is heterogeneous. It is confused—a hotch-potch: that is, the numerous sensations have not undergone a co-ordination. Music, then, is to them cacophony—a series of unrelated sounds—a “noisy tumult.” A picture is a congeries of colours—“an assault upon the optic nerves.” A piece of literature is senseless—“a jumble of words.” But the person who is highly sensitised and trained in æsthetic problems is affected in no such manner. He is capable of perceiving the complex relationships of the numerous sensations in an advanced art work, and consequently he reacts pleasurable to the unity of the form.

## 202.

**ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND ART.**—It is impossible completely to understand a master artist unless one has progressed as far in some art as the master has in his own. The gods do not give the greatest ecstasy to one who has not worked for it. It is only the ignorant who assume that it is possible for them to scale the heights without effort. Would you dare assert that Beethoven did not understand and feel the music that preceded him far better than any other man of his epoch?

**TWO TYPES OF ART PHILOSOPHER.**—In all the arts there are two kinds of philosophers. On the one hand, there are the men who, during mental excursions, come upon knotty problems and attack them, endeavouring thus to gain a deeper insight into art and life. These men cannot rest until they have traced a problem to its inception and have related its solution to all the other knowledge they possess. These are the precise thinkers out of whose activities has grown all progress in every line of human endeavour. They are the creative, constructive minds whose conclusions, like stairways, make it possible for their followers to attain to even greater heights. On the other hand, there are the symbolists and mystics who merely feel that life is a result of profound and obscure forces, and who clothe their visions in heavy veils of rhetoric. They pose as the seers and mediums of mysteries, and would have you believe that they have touched life so nearly at its source that explanation or solution is beyond the grasp of finite minds. These are the men incapable of sequential thinking. Consequently they preach "divine inspiration," æsthetic supernaturalism, intuition and symbolism. When we consider that the great majority of people are wholly incapable of analytic

thought, it is not to be wondered at that this latter class of teachers passes for the profound thinkers, while those who make specific additions to the world's storehouse of knowledge are looked upon as superficial materialists. To the influence of such teachers, who prey upon the religious impulses of the general, is attributable the fact that the science of æsthetics has made so little progress. In art they are the Maeterlincks, the Mallarmés, the Moreaus, the Carrières, the Boecklins, the Debussys and the Moussorgskys.

## 204.

THE SUPERFICIAL JUDGMENT.—Art, having a trivial as well as a profound side, results in an illiterate person believing, with sublime and unconscious egoism, that he is able to see all there is in it, and in scoffing at those who proclaim to have found something of which he is unaware.

## 205.

THE PRACTICAL AND THE AESTHETIC VIEW-POINT.—In contemplating an object, there are two main viewpoints from which it may be approached—the practical and the æsthetic. The former viewpoint regards it as a fact, an object in itself, fraught with possibilities, reactions, suscep-

tibilities and the like. The latter viewpoint sees only the *aspect* of the object—its appearance under the conditions existent at the moment of contemplation, its relationship with other objects, its method of presentation, its superficial characteristics as a visual thing. This viewpoint demands only that the object give *momentary* pleasure or satisfaction, and is unrelated to either causes or effects, or, for that matter, to reality itself. Thus to one who views an object aesthetically, it is not necessary even that the object be the actual thing it appears to be. If a flower, it may be wax, provided the colours and lines of it are pleasing: if a tree, it may be papier maché, so long as its appearance gives pleasure. Illusion does not detract from one who regards life aesthetically. But in the practical man the authenticity of the object viewed is primarily necessary. He is interested, not in the object's aspect, but in its material potentialities. He questions the character of the tree, its manner of growth, its age, its availability as building material. In short, he demands truth. The other man demands only beauty. Here we have a definition of art in relation to truth. Beauty and truth are not synonymous. An object is not beautiful in itself. Its beauty lies wholly in its aspect, which may be a lie to the man who views nature practically.

## 206.

*CHACUN À SON GOUT.*—What of the sentiment in art? you ask. What of the ecstasy of sweet association, the thrill of dramatic suspense, and the pleasure of recognition? In answer let me point out that if you go to art for such things it is not necessary to go to the greatest art. Tschaikovsky can draw more tears than Beethoven: Victor Hugo is more excitatory than Balzac: Raphael is more charming than Rubens. For such people there is always the “art” of the drama—that bourgeois amusement. And for the semi-intellectual there is, of course, the opera.

## 207.

**RELATION BETWEEN REACTION AND THE SCIENCE OF AESTHETICS.**—The science of æsthetics, which is founded on personal responsiveness and feeling, can be understood by an individual only up to that point where he ceases to react emotionally to a work of art. Unlike other sciences which deal with nature’s manifestations objectively, the æsthetic science cannot be pursued by pure reasoning or by empiric research. No amount of experimentation or logic can make one accept a work of art as great unless one can simultaneously *feel* that that work is great. Thus

can we account for the divergent opinion of critics regarding a complicated composition. One may hold that it is powerful and emotionally efficacious; another that it is impotent and meaningless. And so the fallacy of "*de gustibus non est disputandum*" is given weight. But what is the truth of the matter? Simply this: The emotionally limited critic denies the inherent existence of æsthetic beauty in a work unless he is personally capable of reacting to it, and at the same time questions the sincerity of the man who responds as the result of a more highly developed sensitivity. For the meagrely equipped critic the science of æsthetics is useless: it is without the substantiation of *emotional* experience. This non-responsiveness in æsthetically deficient natures constitutes the chief obstacle in the way of the science of organised form; for all æsthetic theories cease with the emotional limitations of the individual.

## 208.

RECOGNISABILITY AS AN ART BASIS.—Persons halted on the hither side of abstract æsthetic emotion are prone to seek in objective nature an explanation for their inability to appreciate art in which the recognisable object is absent. Incapable, because of a sentimental or unrobust nature, to divest themselves of the minor associative and

literary emotions, and unable to record a purely æsthetic sensation, they hope to find an explanation for their responsive shortcomings in the many phases of recognisability. At once the problem of æsthetics appears hopelessly fuddled and contradictory. But the truth is that what they mistake for æsthetic complexities are incidents on the road to the higher appreciation, and that, when the intense æsthetic emotion is arrived at, the lesser associative pleasures are crowded out and left far behind. It is natural, however, for a man whose higher æsthetic responsiveness is limited to attribute undue importance to the incidentals of art, and to judge that a theory of æsthetics which has superseded them is lacking in adequacy.

209.

**THE RETICENCE OF BEAUTY.**—There is no such thing as spontaneous beauty. There can be a pleasurable sensation transmitted to us instantaneously; but beauty, which is the assimilation of form, either auditorily (as with music), or ocularly (as with painting), or mentally (as with literature), reveals itself only after a process of activity and a series of mental and physical adjustments. There is time extension implied in all æsthetic experiences; and it is never safe to judge an art work by one view or hearing. Our

cock-sure modern critics (whose names would fill this page) presume to pass judgment on the basis of the most cursory observation, the un-spoken theory being that true beauty gives itself to the beholder immediately. This point of view is an illiterate one, and is allied to the theory that explanations are not needed for true art. The perception of beauty, however, necessitates a process of organising various factors ; and this process includes a registering of relationships and differences, physical adjustments and readjustments, a tracing of sequential lines of form, a concentration and shifting of attention, an exercise of memory which results in projections and throw-backs, muscular activities, a drawing up of a series of tensions, and their accompanying relaxations. It is almost safe to say that the greater the beauty the longer time it requires to recognise it and to react to it. Many of the greatest pieces of art reveal themselves to us only after days and sometimes weeks of study.

## 210.

**SENSATIONAL AND PERCEPTIVE ART.**—All works of art are either sensational or perceptive. That is, they either affect us immediately, thrusting themselves upon our passivity like a perfume, a colour or a single musical note, and are communi-

cated to our brains through our nervous mechanism; or else they *hold our attention* and produce in us a process of contemplation, making us conscious of various relations of forms, colours and sounds. Thus a picture painted, let us say, in a series of blues, with the outlines blurred—a picture in which there is a unity, not of æsthetic form but of effect—will produce in us a single impression or sensation. The subject-matter and the forms are so dominated by the sensational aspect of one colour or tone that they cease to function or impose themselves upon us at first glance. And a piece of music, by the constant repetition of one note, or the continuous tapping on a single kettle-drum, may *affect* us, not as a melody with form and variations, but as a tone which will (according to its placement and timbre) depress or elate us. Likewise a piece of literature, by the use of certain sonorous words and the insistence on an *idea* (document being the corresponding literary element to colour and sound), may produce in us a specific and unified sensation, as do the tales of Poe, for example. In all such works there exists no æsthetic value. They are primitive, slightly removed, in the *artistic* sense, from the music of the tomtom. The attribute of form is nullified; and without form there can be no art in the æsthetic sense. On the other hand, there is *perceptive* art—the art

which, by diversifying the constituents of the medium, leads to contemplation. Such art cannot be grasped at once. No one colour predominates to such an extent as to make the other colours negligible: no one note is repeated so that all the other sounds in the gamut become a mere background of confused and neutralised sound: no one idea is emphasised to the point where the document is brought to a minute focus. Instead, there is a *balance of parts*, an interdependent relationship of all the factors of the medium, so that a definite form takes shape. And this form can be grasped only by contemplation, by bringing the mind to bear on all the constituents of the work and by tracing their dependence one on another. All great art belongs in this category.

## 211.

Two SPECIES OF ART.—Some go to art merely as a recreation, to be soothed and delighted. (“What lovely colour!” “How restful!”) Others go to art for stimulation, to receive a dynamic æsthetic experience. (Silence!) There are two types of art to gratify both types of individuals: for the former, Rubinstein, Schumann, Chopin, Donatello, Corot, Greuze, Whistler; for the latter, Brahms, Beethoven, Bach, Michelangelo, Rubens, Da Vinci, Cézanne.

## 212.

**SYMBOLISM.**—Those who search for symbolism in art are incapable of true æsthetic emotion. Unable to react to a work of art which they have been taught is great, they seek to endow it with petty mythical qualities which their minds are capable of grasping.

## 213.

**ART APPRECIATION SUBJECT TO EVOLUTION.**—Complete and profound appreciation of art does not appear suddenly in an individual. In the beginning there are only a sensitivity and an intelligence which form the nucleus of appreciation. This nucleus is susceptible of development, but the person possessing it cannot, at first view, comprehend the great and complex art works of the masters. Such a person must begin his education with works easy of understanding. Many, who might eventually be able to see into the depths of æsthetic expression, become biased against the higher forms of art because of their inability to sound them without preliminary preparation. It is these people who declare primitive and simple decorative art (folk-music and mosaics) to be the greatest. The true art lover, however, does not halt at this stage. He begins his appreciation

before the simpler creative expressions; and there takes place within him a gradual evolution of comprehension. When he receives pleasure from a simple art work, he at once analyses its motivating power. In time the result of his analysis becomes assimilated; and later, when he comes before a slightly more complex work, he stands in the same relation to it as he did to the first, only now he is strengthened by his past mental processes. Thus he proceeds to the third work, which is less simple than the first two; and so on, to the limit of his capabilities. There does not exist a great artist who, at the *début* of his career, could have understood his later creations.

## 214.

**LAW AND TASTE.**—Do not deceive yourself. Taste is not a point of view or an *a priori* preference which you bring to objects, contacts, colours and sounds. Taste is the physiological reflex which results from receptivity. When stating your preference you are diagnosing your bodily characteristics. And you are doing more than that: you are stating heliotropic and chemical laws. No amount of voluntary activity can alter your reflexes. You have registered an impression which, because it is physical, is unalterable. The seeming fluctuations in taste are

due largely to psychic changes. The physical and chemical laws governing our reactions to stimuli are permanent. There are no meta-chemical persons.

## 215.

UNAESTHETIC PRETENDERS.—A pure æsthetic reaction among art lovers is a rare experience. The great majority of persons who pretend to appreciate art never so much as puncture the surface of a genuine art work. They see only its superficial side, its *inartistic* integument. They react, not to æsthetic forms, but to the literary accretions which have attached to all the arts and hidden their inner message. So long have critics written almost exclusively concerning the minor and insignificant accompaniments of art, that its true significance has become obfuscated in a mass of rhetorical irrelevancies. The average critic, like the average individual, sees only anecdote, materiality and illustration in painting; moods, symbolism, associative promptings and dramatic effects in music; description, plot and style in literature. But all these qualities and characteristics represent only one phase of art—its most superficial and unimportant phase. The other side of art is its true and vital content. Here are the depths of art—the fundamental form, the basic significance. Herein one comes

in contact with the complex laws of form and organisation; and it is by these laws that art is to be tested if we would determine its true worth. The educated art lover—the one capable of genuine and profound appreciation—overlooks the obvious surface of an art work and goes at once to the deeper form, the inherent structure. The reason that modern art has so generally been denied sanity and been dismissed as charlatanism is because it strives toward an elimination of the nugatory qualities by which the superficial art lover and critics judge all creative works. Modern art is tending toward purification—that is, toward a clear and unencumbered statement of the æsthetic basis on which all great art is necessarily built. It attempts to do away with the literary, anecdotal, illustrative and associative obstacles. Therefore, since these are the very qualities that have commonly constituted the foundation of art valuation, the unæsthetic individual finds modern art incomprehensible, and attempts to dismiss it as meaningless. But did he understand the older art in any of its profounder phases he could understand the modern art. Between the old and the new there is only a superficial difference: they strive for the same effect,—only their means are dissimilar. The present-day scoffer cannot grasp the new because he has never grasped the significance of the old.

## 216.

**CRITICISM BY TASTE.**—The critic whose basis of judgment is taste, or personal impression, is the least bearable of all egotists. The egotistic artist produces beauty; but the impressionist critic produces naught but opinions. To appreciate a work of art one must be able to re-create it; in short, the true critic is a creator. And, by the same token, the true creator is a critic. Creation is but a series of criticisms applied to an active medium. But the average critic tells us only what pleases him, and asks us to accept his judgment. He repudiates science, declaring that his impressions are more accurate. But why, one might ask, is *his* impression more accurate than the impression of another? His answer will be only a piece of egotism. Impressionist criticism is founded entirely on unsubstantiated conceit. It is antipathetical to progress. It apotheosises ignorance. It attempts to make of art a kind of mild recreation—a pastime and a sport without vital significance and without any intimate relation to life. But such a trivial and personal attitude pleases the illiterate. Every one imagines himself to be a critic of art. The greatest critics, in the eyes of the world, are the men who display the greatest amount of erudition, for this erudition is regarded as a justification

of their conceit. Hence the respect for such men as *Sainte-Beuve* and *Brunetière*.

## 217.

**FORM AND SUBSTANCE.**—True art creates in us a desire for repetition, and gives us, on continual contemplation, a never-decreasing emotional gratification. How insignificant then become the plot in literature and the anecdote or illustration in painting! We may know the plot of a book thoroughly, and yet find an added pleasure in re-reading it. We may be familiar with every illustrative detail in a picture, and still enjoy it after repeated perceptions. And the longer we contemplate a painting, or the oftener we read a book, the less value attaches to plot or illustration. This does not hold good of a book which is wholly narrative, or of a picture which is merely illustrative. Of such works we tire at once, and find no pleasure in repeating our perception of them any more than we enjoy going over the figures of a problem which we have once solved. The conclusion is obvious that the enduring quality of art is something deeper than the mere story or transcription—that the substance is nugatory as compared to the form. The fundamental structure upon which the material (plot, mood, representation) is built is the only test of æsthetic worth.

## 218.

**TRUE CRITICISM.**—Criticism is not the finding of analogies, but the explaining of differences. It is the analysing of art works in their relation to other art works; and its purpose is so to clarify and explain the processes of one artist—his errors as well as his merits—that another artist, reading the criticism, will immediately be led to try the other's methods, assimilating what is relative to him, discarding that which is not. The basis of a critic's judgment should be a knowledge of the functioning of his own brain and body—which is the same as saying a knowledge of the broad principles on which all nature—and therefore art—is built. The critic should also possess the philosopher's power of penetration, and in addition should understand the basic laws of æsthetics. Furthermore, he should be superior to his own tastes and prejudices, capable of overriding his personal predilections.

## 219.

**THE CULT OF THE NEWLY-INTELLECTUAL.**—There is a certain type of shallow iconoclast whose entire enthusiasm is summed up in the word “new.” He allies himself intellectually with the latest manifestations in art, irrespective of their worth,

and disparages all the great work of the past. He generally possesses a superficial knowledge of the manners and conditions of art, and manages to give a pseudo-authoritative air to his anarchistic preferences. If his chief interests or attainments are musical, he decries the scores of Haydn and Brahms and even Beethoven, and acclaims the compositions of the ultra-modern musicians. If his tastes have been nurtured in an environment of painting, he will scoff at the Renaissance masters and do obeisance before the canvases of the latest abstractionists. To him the past is dead, for he has never fully understood the past. His heresies are without foundation, and his choices are insincere because unreasoned. He is without the knowledge which would give him power to distinguish between that which is enduring and that which is transient. He imagines that a scornful repudiation of the giants of yesterday and an unbounded eulogy of the radicals of to-day will act as a substitute in the world's eyes for a deep and comprehensive knowledge. But he impresses only those who are as mentally shallow as himself.

220.

**VERBAL CLAQUEURS.**—Those specious critics who describe a work of art as possessing a “spiritual beauty,” a “noble purpose,” a “poetic con-

tent," a "mystical passion," an "other-worldliness," a "divine symbolism," a "sublime import," or a "devotional tenderness"—such critics are merely indulging in vague and high-sounding synonyms for their ignorance of the science of æsthetics. They feel,—but they do not understand the means employed by the artist to make them feel. They are not true critics, but illiterates applauding with their mouths.

## 221.

THE CRITIC AS THE DUPE OF SECOND-RATE ARTISTS.—The superficial and "sensitised" attitude of the critic is not altogether his own fault. Critics as a rule spring into existence by being told that they understand art. The man who fills the critic's chair rarely possesses sufficient initiative to have commandeered his position unassisted. The second-rate artist is the power behind the critic's judgment. He it is who, sensing his own ignorance of great art, sees in mystery and transcendentalism an opportunity for recognition: he realises that symbolism can masquerade as fertility of thought, and that ambiguity is not seldom a synonym for profundity. He therefore talks mystery, heaven-sent suggestion and inspiration, and at the same time substantiates the vagueness and incertitude of the critic. Thus, while

fattening on the proceeds of a spurious eminence, he gratefully repays the critic for his eulogies by agreeing with the other's puerilities. The conspiracy of mutual ignorance gathers force and power. The public, beholding the critic and the artist in complete accord, accepts the dicta of the one and the work of the other. This is why all art journals are devoted to second-rate art and are edited by second-rate critics.

## 222.

CRITICS A HINDRANCE TO AESTHETICS.—One reason for the backwardness of the science of æsthetics is to be found in the appointment of unphilosophic men to the position of critic. Critics are chosen, not for what they know, but for what they feel. Consequently the positions are held by extremely receptive-minded persons who, while sometimes feeling the mastery of the work before them, cannot appreciate it profoundly because they are ignorant of the laws governing it. The great mass of irrelevant, prejudicial and unreasoned criticism which for years has flooded our journals has turned the thinking man not only against the critics but against the artist as well. Such critics as Pater, Anatole France, Gautier, Baudelaire and Arthur Symons have come very near making the sensitive artist hate

himself. It is only in very recent years that the philosophic and scientific minds have, in going direct to art, discovered that the field is more than worthy of their profoundest concern. As a result, analytic thinking is supplanting the merely sensitised impressionism of yesterday's art critics. The Appollinaires are succeeding the Baudelaires; and the Clive Bells and Roger Frys are taking the place of the Arthur Symonses.

## 223.

*SIC ITUR AD ASTRA.*—In art, perhaps more than in any other phase of life, one's instinct is to argue from one's limited viewpoint. Art logic is dictated by immediate experience. The constant illiterate insistence that art is a democratic manifestation has stripped it of the intellectual respect necessary for understanding it. Consequently that form of painting to which one is attracted most highly will be the basis of that person's *esthétique*. And since we first react to simple and unesthetic works—generally to sentimental things—simplicity becomes our gauge of art merit. Thus do the kindergarten painters, writers and composers acquire fabulous reputations. And the democratic critics use that popularity (human appeal, they term it) as proof of the artists' greatness! Tschaikovsky, Dickens

and Millet are thus raised to the rank of greatness.

## 224.

DIFFERENT PHASES OF THE ARTS.—Although, for the artist, there exists a definite lacuna between the documentary and illustrative side, and the purely æsthetic side of the three arts, the public is inclined to believe that there is no such distinction. They believe that painting is wholly a question of exalted illustration, that writing is entirely a matter of telling a story well, and that the mission of music is to evoke moods of gaiety, melancholy and the like. From their standpoint, all truly great art should bring tears (either of joy or sorrow) to the eyes. Hence their adoration of the theatre. To them the utilitarian side of art is also important. Music is the invitation to the dance: literature lends itself admirably to document; and painting may be used as an auxiliary of document, for the purpose of visualising scenes and events. Here ends the public's concern with art. Art, however, for the man who knows and loves it, has an entirely different meaning, for not one of the qualities commonly attributed to it has any ability to move one æsthetically. Music, literature and painting, *as arts*, are based on certain foundations which give the sensitive and tutored auditor, reader or spec-

tator an emotion of rhythmic tactile form. It is the artist's knowledge of his medium in all its plastic phases, combined with his ability to construct form as nature constructs life (namely, as inevitable sequences, growing out of the conjunction of two dominating forces), that creates in us that feeling of organised solidity which is the end of all art and which alone produces emotional satisfaction. The greatest art is that which makes us feel the underlying forces of life most powerfully.

## 225.

**IN DEFENCE OF COMPLEX ART.**—There is always a feeling of pleasure in overcoming an obstacle or in solving a problem; and the more stubborn the obstacle and the more perplexing the problem, the greater the pleasure of conquering. This is why the greater æsthetic pleasure comes as a result of having understood or comprehended a complex or subtle piece of art. An obvious piece of art may please us mildly; but we have not been necessitated to grapple with it intellectually. We have been denied the pleasure of overcoming.

## 226.

**THOUGHT AND ART INSEPARABLE.**—Many of the leaders of modern art have been charged with

having too philosophic and analytic an outlook to be genuinely creative artists. Indeed, by many the whole constructive revolution of the contemporary searchers—Strauss, Schoenberg, Korn-gold, Cézanne, Matisse, Picasso—is regarded as a coldly scientific and theoretical movement. Is ignorance, then, an aid to the creator? Is knowledge a handicap to æsthetic production? It is difficult to regard such a doctrine seriously. In the entire history of art there has never been a great creator who did not possess a profoundly philosophic brain, who was not a leader of men and thought, who did not sense more than vaguely the underlying forces of life. Where history stops on the hither side of their work, we can read the problems of philosophy from their creations; and herein lies the man! Yet there are critics who sneer at the idea of “understanding” a piece of art. One should, they explain, enjoy it immediately and instinctively! A dictum of ignorance! Is not such a doctrine the outgrowth of a desire to explain away one’s lack of enjoyment? Thought is a great and joyful adventure for all but weaklings: it has even wooed men away from life. But the non-thinker, fearing the vicissitudes of thought, cries “degeneracy” at the notion that æsthetic enjoyment necessitates a process of mentation. Furthermore, he denies that the man who ponders and analyses can enjoy a

work of art. Another stupid fallacy. It is only he who understands, to the last point, the construction of a master's work, that is able to experience the fullest ecstasy which the work has to offer. Who would dare say that the onlooker receives more pleasure from an art work than the artist who created it? When we can *know* a work of art as well as feel it, can *live* it as well as admire it, we are, in reality, only recreating the work with the artist as personal guide.

## 227.

WHY THE NEW COLOUR ART AT FIRST SEEMS HARSH.—The eye must be trained to receive powerful colours, just as the ear must be trained to receive powerful sounds. The development of the modern orchestra has been gradual, and the ear has had time to adjust itself by degrees to the increased volume of sound. If the modern orchestra had suddenly sprung into being in Haydn's day, for instance, the music would have been lost in the unaccustomed turbulence: the ear would have revolted. The art of colour has recently been liberated with astonishing suddenness. It has blossomed forth almost overnight. This is why it dazzles eyes fed altogether on dull and neutral tones. When the eye becomes adjusted, like the ear, complaints of raucousness

and harshness will cease; and colour's new intensity, like that of music, will give birth to a fuller æsthetic emotion.

## 228.

POPULARITY AND THE ARTS.—Whereas many great works of art in music and literature can, while being significant, possess elements of popularity, no work of painting or sculpture which depends solely upon its own pure expression can appeal to the general public. This is explainable by the fact that painting and sculpture are unable either to produce superficial sensations by physical means (as music can), or, when abstract, to call up reminiscent moods and associations, after the manner of literature. The only works of painting and sculpture capable of pleasing the mediocre are those which are unrhythymical and are at bottom literary—the highest type being such works as Rodin's *Le Penseur* and Botticelli's *Spring*. Even when painting and sculpture are deliberately planned for popular appeal, they can never have the wide-spread popularity of a piece of lively dance music or a third-rate novel of dramatic adventure, for in these latter works the sensational reaction is far stronger and of greater duration. A popular picture or statue can at best give one but a momentary sensual reaction, not

through its insistence upon rhythm, but because of its imitative presentation of a subject. This explains the wide-spread interest in music and literature as opposed to the limited interest in painting and sculpture.

### 229.

**IN DEFENSE OF LAW.**—Music—the most exact and formal and rigid of the arts—is the furthest advanced, the purest, and the most moving. What have the petty carpers at systems to say to this?

### 230.

**INSTINCTIVE DEMAND FOR ORDER.**—The excluding process through which the mind goes when contemplating a work of art attests to the fact that it is primarily form and order which constitute art's attractiveness. If you are reading a book wherein there is an irrelevant passage, your instinct will be to pass over it without reading. It is not in line with the story and is therefore excluded. When regarding a painting wherein there is a smear or a flaw constituting a line or shape unrelated to the picture's composition, your eye at once excludes it. You refuse to contemplate it or to connect it with the picture's linear directions. Also during a mu-

sical recital you strive to exclude noises or sounds from the outside and to concentrate your attention on the music alone. If these accidental passages, lines or sounds fitted into the æsthetic scheme of the art work under contemplation, you would not exclude them. It is only when they run counter to the form of the work that you find it necessary to eliminate them. The process is a result of your unconscious and instinctive demand for order. And if these extraneous shapes are so aggressive as to oppose exclusion, your pleasure in the art work under contemplation is spoiled.

## 231.

**THE RESENTMENT OF IGNORANCE.**—The antagonism of the layman to the great artist is due largely to the fact that the great artist is not easily understandable. He requires effort in order to be comprehended. Appreciation is as difficult as creation. Herein is implied the function of the critic.

## 232.

**UNITY IN MUSICAL PRESENTATION.**—Those who prefer the solos of great virtuosi to complete and balance orchestral performances have not yet attained to that æsthetic vision in which a larger

unity has supplanted the superficial unity of single tones. The implied unity of a single instrument is a two-dimensional image; whereas the unity of a perfectly welded orchestra is the unity of subjectively tactile form: all the musical items are co-related and interdependent. One untutored in æsthetic form is apt to regard the orchestra as pluralistic; but, in truth, it is as expressive of unity as the human body which also is composed of a multitude of parts.

### 233.

**FUTURISM.**—Nothing during the last century has so injured the cause of modern painting as has Futurism. Because of its wide publicity it has come to be regarded by the uninformed as the pivot around which the new work swings. It is not seldom used as a genetic term to characterise the entire cycle of modern æsthetic endeavour in painting, and is frequently set up as a standard of valuation. But Futurism is modern only by a chronological accident. Basically it is old, and, as a manifestation of the twentieth century, is decadent. It is not in line with the modern evolution; but a throw-back. It has no relation, either organically or superficially, to the principles of the new progress. At bottom it is illustration, and its entire aim is representa-

tion. There is no difference in mental attitude between an illustrator of materiality and an illustrator of moods and sensations. The most primitive music strove for precisely the same effect that Futurism strives for. It is without æsthetic significance, and consequently no more than a cuticle growth on genuine modern art. Its bizarrie of appearance has intrigued the shallow-minded who are unable to distinguish between the reality and the simulacrum. Not until it has been ignored or forgotten will the true significance of the authentic modern art be appreciated.

### 234.

**MISINTERPRETING ART'S PURPOSES.**—The chief obstacle in the way of æsthetic appreciation is an inability to distinguish between the apparent and the organic purposes of art.

### 235.

**HANDICAPS TO THE STUDY OF PAINTING.**—To be popular a painter must be something of a professor in the subjects of literature, archæology, photography, botany, meteorology and physiology, for when the mind of mankind exerts itself on a work of graphic art, it operates through these channels. Philosophy and æsthetics might

be non-existent so far as popular appreciation is concerned. After centuries of association with works of painting the public is no nearer a comprehension of rhythmic ensembles than it was during fifteenth century Italy. The fault lies in our methods of teaching. So long as the representative side of painting is insisted on, just so long will the world remain in ignorance of æsthetic principles. To-day the average school girl knows more of music than critics know of painting. This is because the inarticulateness of music has facilitated study along purely abstract and theoretical lines. Musical progress has not been impeded by a whole suite of extraneous considerations, as in the case of painting.

## 236.

**THE INTELLECTUAL JUDGMENT.**—The intelligence of an artist rarely furnishes the world with a criterion of appreciation. He is generally judged by his sensuousness, by his mannerisms, by his thematic selection, by his temperamental predilections, even by his sentiments. But these are factors of only secondary importance to his art. To arrive at a true valuation of his powers, one must judge the artist by his intelligence alone. Here there is stability and order. However, it must not be implied that the intelligence alone

can create. This were impossible; but impressions must first be consciously organised before they can be given concrete expression.

## 237.

THE DEMAND FOR OBVIOUSNESS IN ART.—An explanation of the popular theory that the test of art is its “humanity” and obviousness, is to be found in the reversed method by which the world judges a work of art. The average person’s admiration for art is born in front of the completed works of the greatest masters. Unable to comprehend them, he turns to those works which are simple and primitive and which can be readily grasped. Here, he imagines, is represented the highest and most conscious expression of the creative will. He can understand primitive art with but little study; and the more complex art, too subtle and deep for his analytic comprehension, becomes in his eyes valueless because seemingly chaotic. Into this point of view enters the demand that art should be sufficiently lucid to give itself easily to the ignorant. Of what value is art, he asks, if it is not comprehensible to all? But why, one asks in return, assume that art is the property of all? One accepts the statements of eminent scientists on subjects which the layman cannot grasp. Why should an untu-

tored person scorn equally scientific and obscure principles of art? Readily comprehensible art is no further advanced than readily comprehensible science. Reverence and curiosity are the first steps to knowledge.

## 238.

**THE MODERN STANDARD OF JUDGMENT.**—When will our art critics rid themselves of the habit of welcoming all disorganised and purely enthusiastic work as profound?

## 239.

**ORIGINALITY.**—Few critics or contemporaries will concede originality to an artist. Rather will they acclaim him greater than he is; but unoriginal he must remain. Modern critics insist that El Greco conceived Impressionism, that Dürer “invented” Cubism. To whom, one wonders, did the critics of their day accredit El Greco and Dürer? The withholding of this credit is due to an over-estimation of its importance. Originality in an artist can in no way give more than a slight and unexpected advance to the mechanical side of his medium: it will never increase his ultimate greatness as a creator. Art is judged by its inherent form, not by its originality.

**QUALITIES IN PAINTING WHICH ORDINARILY PASS AS GREAT.**—In the general contemplation of painting many qualities which are regarded as definite signs of greatness have no bearing on the æsthetic worth of the work. These qualities meet certain demands in the individual whose education has been faulty or whose responsiveness is the result of early emotional associations. When the average critic beholds poorly depicted objects of rich and varied colouring, he not infrequently mistakes their ornamental aspect for technical variety. When he sees an effective rendition of a beautiful woman, he is apt to overlook the mediocrity of execution in his rapt contemplation of the desirable subject. Confronted by a rural scene which recalls mellow and sentiment-hallowed vistas of childhood, the critic once more errs by attributing to the artist a high degree of creative reaction to natural beauty. In each of these three instances we find a critical judgment based on considerations which are personal and unrelated to intrinsic artistic merit. On the technical side of art we find other errors of valuation. Portraiturists who, by exaggerating or idealising certain salient facial characteristics, achieve what is commonly called “character” (after the manner of Frans Hals) are held in high

esteem because of some imagined esoteric insight. Again, those painters who practise a careless and economical method of brushing and attain to a free and brilliant technique—the Besnards and the Sargents—are ranked above the profounder men whose surfaces are less masterful. The rich *matière* of a Manet is more admirable in the critics' eyes than the profundities of a Cézanne. Canvases in which the colours are highly neutralised with white; landscapes revealing stiff and airless objects with cold and net outlines; portraits wherein one may read aloofness, dignity and personal detachment—here, too, are qualities which commonly pass as great. The early primitives have been highly praised for their “austerity”—another quality of accepted greatness. But this austerity was not even the result of an æsthetic impulse. The primitives, just learning the lessons of art, desired, above all, to produce in the spectator a quiet, contemplative and calm emotion, unruffled by any sensuality or memory of life. This purely religious ideal, misunderstood by modern critics, has set criteria of judgment; and not until these extrinsic appeals are ignored will we be able to approach to a pure æsthetic comprehension of the art of painting. We, as moderns, are capable of other and deeper emotions; and these must be gratified before we are able to experience a complete æsthetic reaction.

241.

QUALITIES IN LITERATURE WHICH ORDINARILY PASS AS GREAT.—The criteria of greatness in literature vary almost with the individual. So long has the æsthetic side of letters been submerged by the sheer documentary that even the foremost literary critics attempt to standardise judgment by narrative, rhetorical and philosophic considerations. The result is that the reasons for literary greatness have become manifold. The very chaotic conditions of this branch of criticism have driven reviewers to insisting openly on personal preference as the only means of arriving at the truth. Sainte-Beuve, Matthew Arnold, Renan and Brunetière each has his individual method of approach, dependent on temperament, philosophy, training and racial viewpoint. Literature has yet to produce a critic whose approach is purely æsthetic. Among the few major qualities which ordinarily determine literary greatness are philosophic import, character analysis, the portrayal of realistic segments of life, cosmopolitanism of outlook, spiritual exaltation, dissection of manners and customs, the solution of social and sexual problems, moral and ethical determinism, psychological research, and fanciful creativeness. And among the minor qualities of commonly conceived literary greatness are suavity and picturesqueness.

of style, atmosphere, narrative consistency, descriptive colour, interest, verisimilitude, precision, and effective details. The moulding and dominating element of literature—namely, the æsthetic import—is rarely considered. But it is this element which brings together and organises all the other elements, and which infuses a literary work with its sustaining vitality. The qualities which ordinarily determine greatness are in the main necessary for the solidity of the material body; but that which distinguishes a great document from a genuine art work is the underlying form and rhythm. And this form and rhythm permeates every sentence of a book and gives it its æsthetic significance. Herein alone lies the true greatness of literary art.

## 242.

**QUALITIES IN MUSIC WHICH ORDINARILY PASS AS GREAT.**—So little does the average auditor know of the theory of music that he is at a loss as to any definite basis for the determination of musical greatness. Even musicians, whose lives are spent in mastering the technique of an instrument, are deficient on the æsthetic side of musical appreciation. Music, being a highly physical and emotional art, furnishes the ignorant many intimate, but necessarily vague, means of forming criteria

of judgment. One is constantly hearing criticisms composed either of generalisations concerning exalted states, or of literary analogies founded on imaginary associations. In all such criticisms of music can be detected a lack of definite and precise statement: the adjectives are ambiguously descriptive: the figures are both personal and obscure, founded on superficial emotional experiences and varying with the temperaments of individuals. One definite fact, however, emerges from all this confused criticism: it is that music is judged great according to its ability to create moods—generally moods either of gaiety or grief. Two good examples of this type of appreciation are Schumann's B<sub>b</sub> (*First*) *Symphony* (which is conducive to a feeling of joy) and Tschaikovsky's *B-Minor (Pathétique) Symphony* (which leads to an emotion of sadness). In all music commonly accepted as great there is, of course, the element of familiarisation—the quality which permits the hearer to reconstruct passages and thereby make them a familiar experience. This is why polyphony never becomes popular: it does not lend itself to memorisation. But in the main, the greatness of all music is ordinarily judged by emotional and associative methods; and here, as in painting and literature, we are confronted by qualities which are only incidental in the highest creation of æsthetic form.

X MEDIOCRITY IN ART.—The innate desire in man for mastery and power inevitably inspires in him from time to time a rebellion against those things which restrict his freedom of thought or action; and so absolute is the domination which great art wields over his every faculty, that, in order to escape its intellectual tyranny, he often longs for wholly human and simple art. At these times he turns from Beethoven, Bach and Mozart to Dvořák, Chopin and Gluck; from Balzac, Shakespeare and Goethe to Gautier, Dumas and the Arabian Nights; from Rubens, Michelangelo and Veronese to Monet, Corot and Japanese prints. Again, there are those persons who will ever remain unable to grasp or feel the harmonious complexities of the greatest creative works; and for them also the more superficial painters, writers and composers will play an important part. Such minor artists are the historians of moods: they depict, by means of sounds, scenes and descriptions, the common experiences of mankind: they evoke emotional states such as sorrow, pleasure, elation and restful contentment: they create familiar atmospheres: they recall romantic, tragic or joyful memories of twilight, storms, sunny landscapes, swaying trees, blue sky, and expanses of water. All these appeals are imperative for

recreation, and because they are easily understandable, even the most intellectual welcomes them during periods of reaction. For this reason there is a need for mediocre art.

## 244.

**KNOWLEDGE AND APPRECIATION.**—Knowledge should be the changing background of one's aesthetic appreciation, never the dominant note.

## 245.

**THE NEW SENSE OF COLOUR.**—Throughout the evolution of man a love of colour has ever been present, manifesting itself in his raiment and the ornaments with which he surrounded himself. First the vivid plumage of birds was utilised; later were discovered and manufactured a few crude dyes; and to-day we are possessed of a large range of earth, mineral, vegetable and chemical colours of great brilliance and permanency, which are used in nearly every article of utility, luxury and adornment. This desire for colour—the result of the human need for variety in all things in life—has given birth to a large school of writers who use words for the purpose of creating a sense of chromatic richness: it has widely influenced orchestral development; and it has, during the past

century, set in motion a new cycle of painting. But, withal, colour has remained an isolated and casual pleasure for the eyes, a detached and fragmentary manifestation: only recently has it been rationalised into a complete and satisfying gamut. One often hears from persons appraising a gown or an interior the comment that a touch of some colour here or there is needed. This absent colour is generally a complementary or harmonic which one feels should be applied in order to complete the pleasurable, but æsthetically incomplete, spectacle. The musical scale has passed through a long evolution of development—first chaos, then the octave, then the third and fifth, and in the end the twelve notes which represent a complete and perfect cycle of sound. Our colour sense, however, has progressed but little. Although a few years ago a colour scale was perfected by a few artists, the presence of such a scale is not known, or even suspected, by the world at large. However, men like Matisse, whose sensitivity to colour is very keen, instinctively set down many perfect chords; and in a few cases there have been painters who have felt the need for absolute values in colour expression. In time a similar need will be more generally felt; and fragmentary canvases, overbalanced by hot or cold colours, will be æsthetically unsatisfying in the same manner that a piece of music, played altogether in the bass

or treble, is unsatisfying. In those artists who have acquired an advanced sensibility to colour lies a greater and more delicate power of co-ordination—a surer ability to make a picture so perfectly balanced that its equilibrium will hang on the slenderest thread. And it is with these artists alone that the new colour sense is taking definite form and attaining to a high importance. Gradually, as the complete scales of colour are seen in their canvases, a conscious and tutored desire for chromatic completion will grow up in the public mind. To-day the perfect colour gamut is the property of only a few; but the possibilities it presents to all artists cannot long be kept hidden.

## 246.

**CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS OBSERVATION.—**  
A common superstition regarding æsthetic perception is that, if one is aware or conscious of performing the operations necessary to perceive a work of art, emotional pleasure is at once reduced. This superstition still holds even among æstheticians and psychologists, although there have been advanced no adequate reasons to justify it. Such a belief is no doubt a relic of the doctrine of faith and acceptance—a by-product of mediæval resignationism. There is almost no evidence, theoretical or actual, to uphold it; and there is much

evidence which condemns it. Why, indeed, should a conscious mental process destroy the effect of physiological activities? Is an ignorant emotion to be preferred to a profound intellectual understanding? In the contemplation of a work of art there are, to be sure, certain minute optical operations which are not recorded by the mind—operations which are, because of their very nature, incapable of being registered consciously. But, on the other hand, there are many perceptive operations which require a conscious knowledge and an active process of the will. In one who sees and feels deeply, these volitional activities produce the greatest and most intense pleasure; and unless one brings to bear on a work of art a conscious concentration and performs the process of perception by organising the intelligence, only a very superficial emotion will be experienced. Art enjoyment, in its deep sense, is a result of education and study, and of painstaking analysis. The greater our knowledge of art, the greater our reaction; and the more conscious our process of perception, the keener our ecstasy. Awareness is the vitality of æsthetic comprehension: the intellectual emotion transcends the physical. The man who enjoys Beethoven's symphonies the most profoundly and who can listen to them repeatedly without tiring, is the analytic musician who understands most thoroughly their construction.

Every note and chord is to him an anticipated event; and he follows the sequences and developments with an almost mathematical consciousness. The pictures of Rubens appeal most forcibly to the artist who sees every line, tone and volume with the accuracy of an architect measuring a set of plans. So with the greatest literature. It is only the able literary craftsman who consciously and analytically traces every word and phrase and device of a book who can read Balzac, for instance, over and over again with increasing pleasure. In order for forms to be appreciated to their full, the spectator must *consciously* perform the operations of perception. And the more coldly intellectual his process, the greater and more lasting his satisfaction. He thus penetrates regions of mental enjoyment unknown to the mere impressionist contemplator.

## 247.

“ARTISTIC” WORKS.—The word “artistic,” when applied to vases, panels, screens, decorations and posters, has come to connote solely a quality of texture. An “artistic” object or picture is one in which the exactitude of drawing is lost in a nonchalant *sensibilité*, and in which the *matière* takes on interest purely as a stuff or substance. The tactile sense, which is highly devel-

oped in even the most intellectual, will be found at the bottom of the average person's idea of "artistic." There is a sensuous, even a physically sensual, appeal in those objects which we term "artistic"—a desire for superficial and material beauty, irrespective of representation or form.

## 248.

**DEDUCTIBLE MATERIAL IN ART.**—"The dignity of art," said Goethe, "appears to the greatest advantage in music, because that art contains no material to be deducted. It is wholly form and intrinsic value." And yet what bitter objections are raised when the other arts attempt to attain to the æsthetic dignity of music! The reason is that our modern critics, reflecting the sentimental prejudices of their inartistic readers, do not desire an art which contains no material to be deducted. Ignorant of "form and intrinsic value," they attribute the whole importance of art to the very material which the true art lover deducts. It is this nugatory material which constitutes our critics' chief basis of judgment. Even in the case of music, instead of accepting its purity of form and its intrinsic value, the critics manufacture material in the guise of symbolism, atmosphere and the like, and thus turn a dignified art into a juvenile literary pastime.

**DILETTANTI.**—Those self-styled art lovers who have tired of the familiarity of the world's great art—the statues of Michelangelo, the paintings of Rubens and Veronese, the symphonies of Beethoven and Brahms—and who insist that they have ceased to derive pleasure from it, have, by their own confession of satiety, failed to sound the depths of great art; that is, they have never reacted to it empathically. When one has derived from art the deepest emotion it is capable of evoking, it becomes a constant and perpetual source of stimulation, increasing, rather than decreasing, in its potency the longer one contemplates it. The reason for this is that the final effect of an æsthetic creation is abstract: great art is a universal experience, changing and regulating itself in accord with the intellectual and physical condition of the individual. It is an ever new and shifting cosmos—a complete revelation of existence, in which all the factors of consciousness are present. One may go to it indefinitely for reaction, and the more thoroughly it is comprehended, the more complete and satisfying will be the reaction: it is an *organic* stimulus. When one tires of a piece of truly exalted art, that person has reacted only to its superficial side—its charm, its sensational appeal, its melodic import,

its mood, its story, or some other casually pleasing aspect. When this minor phase of an art work has been completely absorbed and experienced, it becomes uninteresting. The beholder or auditor then repudiates it,—that is only natural. But such a person is, almost without exception, one who disparages exact knowledge in æsthetics and who apotheosises “feeling” and “personal taste.” Satiety of great art is what characterises and defines the dilettante.

## 250.

**THE PROPER APPROACH TO ART.**—One should not go to art in a consciously critical mood, but rather with a mind wholly mobile and prepared to take on the form of the work. One’s reservations should be only those dictated by a knowledge of what is irrelevant to a work of art; and even that knowledge should not be so recently acquired as to make for distinct antagonism. One must remember that art, like life, is never final, but ever in a *state of becoming*. Therefore a dogmatic attitude of what should or should not be, from the æsthetic viewpoint, lessens complete enjoyment: only philosophic impossibilities should be considered. Before a piece of great art the dormant mental machinery will at once be set in action; but, if the mind is already active, only

chaos will result from its coming in contact with an exterior power.

### 251.

THE INTELLECT IN ART.—Merely to *feel* art is to sink to the plane of the primitive savage: to *recognise* art, by an intellectual process, attests to the highest degree of culture to which man has attained. The ignorant and unrefined live by their instincts, their nervous systems, their prejudices and sentimentalities. The intellectual and cultured man is controlled by constructive thinking, by logic, and by the impersonal recognition of truth. Genius is the alliance of a pure sensitivity with a generating intelligence; and it can be discerned only by those who bring to it the faculties which enter into its making.

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